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CANADA'S WEEKLY NEWSMAGAZINE | www.macleans.ca

DECEMBER 8 2003

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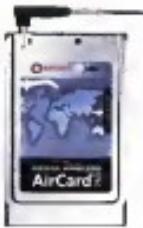
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"Yes, *Trailer Park Boys* is rude and crude, but it's all part of the charm. I don't think the show is for everyone, but it's definitely for me." —AMANDA BROWN, Coonan, Miss.

#### Trash talking

I thoroughly enjoyed "TV's bad boys" [Cover, Nov. 24] on the *Trailer Park Boys*. I have been a TPS fan for all three seasons and it's so nice to see that we finally getting the recognition they deserve. We watch it with our dad every Sunday and are always guaranteed a laugh. A great movie and hopefully a small-town Canadian show is taking off as well. Bubblegum rule!

Kristy Whowell, Witness

I am surprised at the garbage that is appearing on TV in recent years. *The Sopranos*, *The Odessey*, *Trailer Park Boys*, just to name a few. We have really stooped pretty low on life if we find humour in a bunch of jocks spewing our foul words. Decency seems to be a thing of the past. It is getting difficult to find anything good to watch anymore. In a very short time we will have had more perm coating on our living rooms than waterfowl, according to

*Trailer Park Boys* is the most disgusting show ever produced on society. This is what starts corruption in world (greed, drugs, violence, etc.). Many people complain how money is unsafe and wonder how we can improve, but with this TV show, come on. What are they thinking?

Dominic Matassa, Hamilton

Now unfortunately in an article mentioning the newest faces of Canadian comedy to say one of our lesser-known talents, Will Sasso, labelled as an American. Will Sasso was born and raised in London, Ont., and though he achieved fame on Fox's *Malcolm*, he recently returned home to host the CBC's *Weekend At The County House*. Maybe the shattering is worse than we thought!

Stephen Macleod, Vancouver

#### Suffer the little children

Regarding your excellent article "Sad little girls" [Investigation, Nov. 24], it should be noted that a steady undercurrent in this kind of exploitation is racism—white North American and European pedophiles can

then. To solve the problem, hunger has to be eliminated from this planet; people have to eat and a hungry person will do anything for food. Punishing either party may help us feel good but it does not work. To solve this and many other tragic situations, the available resources per capita have to increase substantially. For this to happen the population must decline significantly and the available resources must multiply. I have no idea how to achieve this. But I do know this: If humans don't find the solution, then nature will. And nature will be much harsher and inhumane than humans.

Stephen John, Calgary

So you are now Canada among 192 countries that have ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child in an effort, among other things, to prevent sexual exploitation of children? How, then, do you explain the refusal of Martin Cooney, minister of "in-justice" at the time, and the federal Liberals, to implement legislation that would raise the age of sexual consent in Canada from the current 14 to 16 years of age?

Edward Knutson, Vancouver, Ont.

It's not enough to try to subdue a few girls in centres to be schooled and trained. Just pass laws that any man caught with a female under 18 will be surgically castrated on a first offence. We'll deal with the female, 18-years-and-up problem later. Where's Loren Bobbin when we need her?

Evelyn Parker, Guelph, Ont.

The child sex trade is a reality that cannot be ignored, whether it's in Asia or here in North America. Sister McClelland's article is a step forward in ending the silence on this violent crime on the lives of children. If we participate in the silence, then we participate in the crime.

Anne-Sophie Daniels, Ottawa

#### Venomous remarks

Brian Borlase's article "Men of the deep" [Books, Nov. 24] was excellent, however his knowledge of venomous arachnids is definitely not impressive. He mentioned that the platypus is the only mammal that produces venom. This is not correct. In fact, here in Ontario we have our very own mortal arachnid. The short-tailed shrew, or Blarina brevicauda, is quite venomous. It is approximately the size of a common mouse

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and can often be found in gardens. Hopefully because work take the lethality of the short-tailed shrew for granted now since he comes across one in his garden.

**Heather Bailey-Smith**, North Gower, Ont.

As a long-time admirer of Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson and their world, I was pleased to see a quotation from Michael Sherrin's review "221B" in your article about Patrick O'Brian. However, you describe Sherrin as an American writer, when he was, in fact, born in Toronto in 1886. He moved to America at an early age, but friends of Holmes in this country regard the Canadian connection of one of the leading figures of the Sherlockian movement.

**Bethany Rodden**, Amherst, N.C.

#### Boomer capitulation

I don't think I can stand to hear one more boomer remark like the author ("Boomers after JK," Maclean's on the Record, Nov. 24). When I look at the voting generation today, I see so-called "sovereign turned corporate nationals," shaking our cores with their overblown SUVs, scrambling for reservations at the least human-esteem restaurants or embracing the latest anti-ageing fad. I see a sour, greedy, unhappy group of people.

**Peter Court-Hamilton**, Toronto

Much like every child of fifty-something parents, I have heard several stories that begin with "when I was your age" and end with how disrespectful my generation is. The 20th century saw more economic, technological and social progress than any other before it. But it was the baby boomers who managed the consensus that polluted our air and water. They headed up the Exxon and WorldCom. They urged their marketing campaigns at young generations for my parents' fast food and the same came many of them are trying to decontaminate to society. And they have arguably marginalized the Third World and helped spur those terrorist who seek to destroy our way of life. Or maybe I'm just a disrespectful and angry thirty-something who has it too easy.

**Reiko Sodaro**, Toronto

Those of us who marched against the Iraq war suffer this pique and clearly recognize the problems in our country tend to think that our parents had only stuck to their beliefs



Always a show on TV with people having sex

in the 1960s and "if we wouldn't be in this mess today." We watch with horror at the destruction our governments are spending in our name and wonder how our parents let this happen.

**Russell Koehler**, Calgary

#### The Canadian game

After your recent cover article ("Game over?" Nov. 3), readers responded with a unanimous theme: that they have grown tired of "professionals" without risking ridiculous salaries and hope to see an alternative in the near future (The Mail, Nov. 17). Well, they didn't have to wait. The Canadian Hockey League exists, made up of the Western Hockey League, Ontario Hockey League and Quebec Major Junior Hockey League, with skilled players aged up to 21, trying to develop into NHL calibre. Many teams are in smaller cities such as Moncton, N.B., Sudbey Ste. Marie, Ont., and Prince George, B.C. I often find this hockey much more exciting and enjoyable to watch than the NHL. The average ticket price is around \$13, above \$40 for season tickets (33 games), which is very affordable considering that \$400 might get you to two Leaf games.

**Walter Blakie**, Oak Bay, Ont.

#### Too much for TV

The article "Sex, sex and sex" (Isaac, Nov. 17) leads me to the conclusion that prime-time media gurus are so screwed up they

are not able to see that meaningful relationships do not necessarily include sexual intercourse. They seem to have lost a sense of intimacy, decency, companionship and friendship for the sake of appealing to the most primitive instincts.

**Elizabeth S. Bragg**, Salmon Arm, B.C.

Whenever I tune on the TV, it seems as though I can always find a show with people having sex or illustrating the fact of having sex. What bothers me is that television programmers are advertising dirty—naughty even. Sex is something shared by two people who love each other. Plastered on every TV screen, it's losing its mystery and allure. Moderation please.

**Allen Goss**, Hamilton

#### Shania's confession

In the "Quote of the Week" (Up Front, Nov. 17), Shania Twain says about Northern Ontario: "There are a lot of hairy girls in winter. You wear long sleeves and pants and you become a gorilla." What is wrong with this woman to say such a thing to an American audience, really? Northern women are so degrading in Northern Ontario women. Most Americans think Canadians live in igloos or sheds and use polar bears for transportation. We are desperately trying to change that image by lifting up Canada to our American audiences. I am so disappointed in Ms. Twain's remarks, and in your magazine for printing them.

**Kay Feuerkraut**, Niagara Falls, Ont.



AUTICA

## THE MACLEAN'S READERS' CHOICE

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CBC Newsworld

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CBCNEWSWORLD

SARS? Mad Cow? The blackout?  
Mongolian elections? Forest fires?  
Vancouver 2010?

But don't stop there! Nominate your favourite athlete, entertainer, health-field person and more.

The results will be in the first-ever Maclean's Canadian of the Year double issue to hit newsstands Dec. 22, 2003.

MACLEAN'S

## MACLEAN'S BEHINDTHESCENES



## VOX POPULI

What do former Ontario Premier Mike Harris and journalist Naomi Klein, author of *No Logo*, have in common? What about Stephen Harper and Stephen Lewis? And Alberta Premier Ralph Klein and same-sex marriage activist John Fisher? They're among the dozens of Readers' Choice nominees for Maclean's first-ever Canadian of the Year.

While the choice of Canadian of the Year will rest with a panel of senior Maclean's editors, our readers' votes will be given due consideration. And that gives you the opportunity to help decide what's bound to be a much-discussed—and controversial—choice.

When you visit [www.macleans.ca](http://www.macleans.ca) and cast your vote, you'll also be invited to give us your choices for the news event, entertainer, athlete and health worker of the year. The spirited competition has yielded the following early leaders in each category:

- News event: SARS (56 per cent)
- Entertainer: Shania Twain (28 per cent)
- Athlete: Mike Weir (48 per cent)
- Health Worker: Roy Romanow (29 per cent)

The results of both the Readers' Choice Poll and the Canadian of the Year will be unveiled in our year-end double issue, which also includes the 20th annual Maclean's Year-End Poll. Watch for it on newsstands the week of Dec. 22 and online at [www.macleans.ca](http://www.macleans.ca).

You have until Dec. 8 to cast your ballot. So take a few minutes to tell us what you think. Your opinion matters and your vote could make all the difference.

For further information about this article, contact:  
[behindthescenes@macleans.ca](mailto:behindthescenes@macleans.ca)

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# UPFRONT

## Justice | The fog of suspicion

William Saenger, imprisoned in Saudi Arabia, then paroled to come back to Canada an angry man. Maher Arar, deported to Syria from New York, then freed to return home to Ottawa to tell a tale of torture. Two brothers from Toronto, Abdul Rafeek and Oussam Khadr, held as terror suspects at the U.S. compound at Guantánamo Bay, Cuba. Abdul Rafeek was let go, mysteriously, perhaps on his luck in July, while Oussam is still behind barbed wire. And, finally, Hassan Almrei detained in Toronto for two years now, providing a cover document on deporting him to his native Syria. Their cases cover a bewildering range of legal and diplomatic issues. Yet all are now bound together with a parcel of politically charged questions about how the federal government sticks up for Canadians abroad, and how Ottawa's role in the war on terror matches—or clashes—with basic human rights.

Last week, someone in government decided to flip back at, at least, some of its critics. An outline of interventions on Saenger's behalf—49 interrupted consular visits by Canadian diplomats and seven trips to Saudi Arabia by Canadian policemen and officials—was leaked to the Globe and Mail. But how far is Ottawa really prepared to go?

On Arar, the government suddenly toughened its line, as Deputy Prime Minister John Manley and then prime minister-to-be Paul Martin hammered his deportation by the U.S. But what about Oussam Khadr? He was just 15 when he was captured among al-Qaeda fighters in Afghanistan last year. Ottawa pleaded, unsuccessfully, for him not to sent to the controversial Guantánamo Bay camp. Now, news that his brother, Abdul Rafeek, was let go so early in July and sent to either



Abdul Rafeek  
Khadr's family tells a news conference that they want him home in Toronto after his stint in Guantánamo Bay prison camp

Pakistani or Afghanian raises new questions about Oussam's future—and his brother's. The Khadr family hired a lawyer, and Abdul Rafeek wants to return to Toronto to explain himself but can't get embassy help. Oussam said it has cost nothing from the man but there is confusion as to which department heard what, when.

Meanwhile, a Toronto judge stayed Ottawa's attempt to deport Almrei to Syria, citing the kind of behaviour rights violations that Arar allegedly experienced. The was case after Almrei was accused of weapons training in Afghanistan (in digital "uniforms" in the early 1990s, he said) and using a false passport to enter Canada. Benignoglu, as soon as all done. So is your government?

JONATHAN GORDON

## MALIBU



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of pay constituency and  
providing for return  
to date when he  
isn't necessarily well.  
British Columbia's Bill comes  
leave some terms  
question about potential  
coupling with Billions.

■ **Lori Smith**  
Lobet and Sonnen  
business bringing out  
car-related books as  
item for holidays. Such  
a perfect complement  
to Lobet's diet, health  
foods and that. Be  
well, Lori. You're  
ever been involved,  
there's still role of  
a hangs on, just at  
the best break.

■ **Gregory Piatnicki**  
Arar's residence in Kitchener  
that's situated in an  
Admiral City, Toronto,  
by living past who etc.  
What does up, came  
down. Don't forget about  
Jeffrey Munn. Some  
badly attack every used  
body part. Munn's head.

■ **Conrad Lingle**  
Lobet's  
lives may much 70th  
anniversary by staying  
long-term vendor of  
Patriot's names  
of the most  
of the most  
of the most  
with a working of  
now. Mark's wife  
hasn't live to 75  
by taking choices.

■ **Sir John A.**  
May take, is first  
on paper with plastic  
action plan of Canadian  
PM's Government  
comes from Internet  
stocks technologies  
Sir Wilfrid Laurier and  
may be Wadatou. How  
about setting off  
Liberals backdoored  
as double Israel didn't

**Quote of the week |** "Standards of behaviour were unacceptably low."

**Public Works Minister and Paul Martin ally RALPH GOODALE**, promising an official crackdown on a government that he's been a member of for the past 10 years.



Mary Janigan | ON THE ISSUES



## ROLLING THE DICE

Our ability to handle a terrorist threat is so weak, it's good we haven't faced a crisis

FOR the security experts, much accustomed to dire thoughts, there were three glimmers, if all-too-possible, scenarios for discussion. One consisted a dirty bomb a mark in Seattle with pneumonia plague in Vancouver and a radiation attack from a ship. The second considered an improved threat to East Coast energy infrastructure. And the third deployed the cool, life-of-mayor of sensors. Ahmed Ressam, who tried to enter the US from Canada in 1999 with explosives.

The participants had gathered behind closed doors at Toronto's C.D. Howe Institute to concert longer-term security strategies from these events. But, amid growing apprehension and friendly squabbling over the nature of Canada's risk, one chilling fact emerged: "The threats are going to be accelerating and more pervasive," says maritime policy analyst Danielle Goldstein, "but Canada does not really have a security policy. The level of operation that is going to be needed, internationally and among Canadian levels of government, is unprecedented."

There is an easy fit. Paul Martin has declared that the development of a national security policy to protect us from terrorism is atop priority. But he oversees an alphabet soup of organizations, reporting to departments ranging from Defence to Health. Ten poorly-supported analysts in the Pew Council Offer are the only ones generating overall government approaches. There is a bright spot: Deputy PM John Manley, one of the more competent ministers (but also, retiring), chairs an ad hoc cabinet committee handling

**"We want a senior cabinet minister whose first thought every day is in the job of keeping Canada safe."**

—DANIELLE GOLDSTEIN  
COUNCIL OF PEW  
COUNCIL OFFER

U.S. security issues, especially the border. But there is no national operations centre for emergencies. Worse, the minister in case of Maher Arar, the Canadian who was the U.S.-deported to Syria on RCMP reports of his alleged terrorist links, indicates the need to preserve civil liberties as a trade-off ratio on information sharing.

These are formulae for failure. MacLean's has learned that Auditor General Sheila Fraser will take the highly unusual step of declining in her March report that Canada needs a central security co-ordinator. Two months ago, the Senate national security committee noted that minister responsible for security are too junior, the appropriate department in any emergency is often reluctant to take the lead because it means paying the bills—and other departments do not pay attention anyway. "We were a senior cabinet minister whose first thought every day is the job of keeping Canada safe," says the committee's chairman, Senator Colin Kenny.

The former head of the Canadian Security Intelligence Service, Jeff Monson, told MacLean's that the solution is to create a special-central intelligence body that would receive reports from every group emerging from CSIS or the money-laundering experts at Finance. "The director would be responsible for putting a senior intelligence secretary on the desk of the prime minister and senior ministers every morning by 8 a.m." adds Monson.

That director would face disparate challenges. At the C.D. Howe conference heard that Canada probably does not have enough antibiotics to deal with a germ attack. But the U.S. would likely have antibiotic exports to provide for us! The wonder is that we have escaped such vicious problems for so long. The urgency stems from the fact that our health cannot last forever.

Mary Janigan is a political and policy writer for *Maclean's* and *the Globe and Mail*.

## FaceTime



See page 108

Sebastien Proulx, 28, left, and Alain Routhier, 21, right, are finally at trial for the 1996 bludgeoning deaths of Routhier's parents and sister-in-law. Prosecutors say the two teenagers killed the family, then camped in Seattle, and today could inherit the state's defense lawyers' challenged legal conclusion after the trial made it to a Moundaw passing on a guilty



See page 108

Country star Guy Carbonneau, 41, started the trending music YouTube channel and a

prescription will mostly drop for a car accident in which he was charged with drunk driving. Phoenix, Ariz., police who charged the Grammy-winning winner with assault after breaking an officer's nose said he understood his wrongdoing and spoke with his lawyer.

His own shortcomings,

but also assured his innocence. Paul Bernsen, the director of the movie *Green Zone*, said that 200,000 to 300,000 Iraqis lost their lives in the conflict, and provided records for a screening at the U.S. Embassy. Gorkin, who ran the relief mission for Kurdish refugees after the 1991 Gulf War, said Nedwey should have put more troops into Iraq to stop the early invasions, and who should have moved more quickly to establish an Inter government.

"I think there was a lot of indecision on how to do post-war ops," Gorkin said. "I just think it reflected the way everybody expected it to."

Frederique Jepp

July 2002: After surgery to repair a tear in her eye and brain following a bullet to the neck of her racing officer. A constituent and opponent of gay marriage was charged with assaulting the Liberal MP, who headed a Commons committee that endorsed same-sex unions.

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WORLD

**CEASEFIRE:** For the first time in years the machine guns fell silent along the disputed Kashmir border as heavily armed rivals India and Pakistan agreed to a temporary ceasefire proposed by Pakistan. The ceasefire does not extend to the militant Islamic group that have been taunting the Indian army, but it has allowed refugees on both sides to engage in holiday visits.

**AMERICA** In a huge partisan win, Republicans forced through a sweeping overhaul of U.S. Medicare, a \$584-billion reform that will provide a drug-benefit plan to nearly 40 million uninsured Americans. Opposed by Democrats and some seniors' groups, the proposal Medicare's four new insurance plans, the bill was also criticized for not imposing price controls on prescription drugs, a victory for the pharmaceutical industry, which now wants to roll back negotiations struck in Canada and Australia.

**COLOMBIA.** In either a hopeful fist-pump or elaborate charade, 800 members of right-wing paramilitaries, responsible for some of the worst atrocities in Colombia's long-running, drug-fuelled civil war, laid down their weapons during a nationally televised



dissenters. Under a July pact with the government, nearly 13,000 Muslim members are to defect by the end of 2008.



**DEMOCRACY** Georgians go to the polls again on Jan. 4, two months after disputed parliamentary elections and on the heels of the so-called "rose revolution" in which Eduard Shevardnadze was ousted.

eads president by moderate unionists, dissidents and, some say, the financial backing of American billionaire George Soros.

Hard-liners defeated moderates in Northern Ireland's long-delayed elections, which does not augur well for reviving Catholic-Protestant power-sharing. Ian Paisley's Democratic Unionists appear to be the biggest winners.

**PEDDLER** A 24 year old British man was sentenced to 42 years in a Thai jail following a five-month sex holiday during which he hired eight boys between 7 and 13 in his rented apartment and uploaded pictures of them as a child-porn site. Meant as an example, the sentencing came as the Thai government was debating legalizing its free-swinging prostitution business.

**CHILD RAPE** Jordan's parliament proposed criminalizing men who rape children. The country reported over 400 cases of child rape in the first half of 2003, many by men who believe the act can cure AIDS.

**DEMENTIA.** MRI scans of middle-aged brains can predict future cases of Alzheimer's disease. In a study of 10, New York researchers used MRI to spot a spot that seems to have a role in the development of dementia, and hoped it could be a target for treatment.

**Hunger** After years of decline in the 1990s, hunger is on the rise again, the UN reported, each night about 842 million people go to bed without enough food.

**www.birds.org** The longest, longlegged warbler, given up to the extinction for more than a century ago, has returned upriver and well in spring. Associated ornithologists documenting *(left)* a distinctive bird found 12 pairs of the reclusive songbird after hearing its haunting call in a remote valley.

BUSINESS

**BROWNFMAN** Seagram heir Edgar Brownman Jr., a one-time cigar tycoon who lost much of the family fortune as oil-fired cigar smoke.

**AIDS TOLL**  
An estimated  
40 million people  
are infected with  
**HIV/AIDS**.  
About 20 million have HIV  
today; this year alone—  
the disease is expected  
to kill 2.5 million.  
Asia and Africa,  
the UN and World  
Health Organization  
report.  
AIDS has endurance  
about 13 million  
children in Africa  
that means it  
could top 20  
million by 2005.



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# Jack Diane

# Something's Gotta Give



Keanu Reeves Frances McDormand Amanda Peet

Globalization is creating new political and economic dynamics, and many believe that such a situation will lead to a new world order.

ment venture with French-run Vivendi SA, is back in the music biz. Steinman led an investor group takeover of Warner Music Group for US\$2.6 billion.

**NUMBERS** The U.S. economy, riding a surge of war spending, rose an eye-popping 3.2 per cent from July to September.

Canada topped the G7 countries in defense spending and also boasted the highest proportion of students—40 per cent—with either a college or university degree.

The Royal Bank of Canada became the first Canadian bank to post \$3 billion in profits in a single year.

**ACQUISITIONS** Cash-strapped British Columbia sold BC Rail Ltd., the country's third largest rail line, to Montreal-based Canadian National Railway Co. for \$1 billion.

B.C. forestry giant Canfor Corp. and Slocan Forest Products Ltd. agreed to a \$455-million share exchange that would create North America's second-largest lumber company. A previous takeover attempt by Canfor was fought off by Slocan in 1998.

**COOKIES** Voortman Cookies Ltd. of Burlington, Ont., jumped in the face of the health by cookie craze, announcing all its products would be free of ubiquitous trans fats, an artery-clogging man-made shortening, by March 2004.

## CANADA

**KILL A CHILD** In Peterborough, Ont., skirmishes in Colorado and at least five young people in Britain have died from this year's influenza outbreak. While it is rare for children to die from the flu, experts say they may be particularly vulnerable this year because previous outbreaks have been mild and thus hampered little opportunity to build immunity.

**ELECTRICITY** Breaking an election promise, Ontario's new Liberal government will lift a 10-year price freeze on electricity on April 1. A new system will cost so-called average homeowners an extra \$6 a month.

**ABUSE** At the centre of a controversy, Mani-Motilal Hospital director, Léon Lafleur, killed himself in a tragic twist to an already sad story. Lafleur's hospital was being investigated by the province after he represented, only



## WINTER'S OTHER POND

With the boards gone, a literary contingent of intrepid writers take over the skating south along Hwy. 106. Scottie's intern there, Hwy. 106 and the cold can play hockey in 'em' c.

Slightly, wee orderlies accused of verbally abusing a bedridden disabled woman. Two sisters of the 57-year-old patient hid a tape recorder in her room, capturing the orderlies swearing, lewd, leaving her in earnest for long periods, and telling her a peeing tom was watching through the window.

**SAME SEX** In Toronto, 933 marriage licenses (men 18) issued by the city's four registrars since gay marriage was legalized in Ontario have gone to homosexual couples, a third of whom came up from the U.S.

Kids raised by gay parents aren't worse

off psychologically or more prone to the gay, according to a study by Canadian Psychological Association.

**JUSTICE** Six Vancouver cops pleaded guilty to common assault for beating three suspected drug dealers to a senior section of Stanley Park almost a year ago, striking and hitting at least one with a baton, and telling them to get out of town. The plus, though reduced charges, effectively kills a civil suit against the officers, the victims' lawyers said.

**HILLS ANGELS** Quebec ordered the demolition of the heavily fortified Melville Angels bunker near Quebec City, which Justice Minister Marc Bellemare called a "symbol of gangrenous." The building and land was seized under federal anti-gang laws.

**POLITICS** Winnipeg Mayor Glen Murray, who is being courted to run federally for the Green, blamed Manitoba Premier Gary Doer for putting the heat on the city's innovative new tax reform. Doer wouldn't buy into a one per cent municipal sales tax for Winnipeg, which he said would only drive shoppers to the border.

Alliance Leader Stephen Harper stripped Regina MP Larry Spencer of his critic's job for family iniquities after Spencer told a newspaper he believes homosexuality should be illegal. Spencer later apologized, but the remarks threw a wrench into the ongoing merger proposal with the Tories.

BY VINCE ROEDDICK



## The Free Flu Shot. The smart thing to do.

In the past year, Ontarians have witnessed how dangerous infectious diseases can be. But the flu is an infectious disease we can beat. You can protect yourself and the people around you by getting your free flu shot. And it's never been easier.

You can see your doctor. As well, many employers and local pharmacies offer free flu shot clinics. Or you can call for a clinic near you. For more information call 1-866-FLU-N-YOU (TTY 1-800-387-5559). Let's Beat the Flu.

# Casey House thanks

all the generous donors who have supported us this past year, and over the past 15 years. Your donations have gone directly to ensuring that we can provide exceptional palliative and supportive care to people living with HIV/AIDS, both in our residential hospice, and in the community. Thanks to you, over 1700 individuals and their families have been touched by our care.



## The following organizations stood out in 2002/2003 with their generous support.

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The Julie-Ligge Foundation  
The Budd Sigman Foundation

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## UPFRONT

Mansbridge on the Record



## EGOS AND LIMOUSINES

There will be some disappointed faces when Paul Martin announces his cabinet

THE LIGHTS were burning late at Stouffville in the early days of June 1979—just Clark was putting together his cabinet after defeating the Liberals in the general election the previous month. There were a lot of things to consider during that transition—it was a minority government, loyalties were to be rewarded, “star” candidates were to come from back country and with a Quebec referendum looming, Clark had to decide how to give that province cabinet representation after winning only two of its 79 seats.

There were theories aplenty swirling around Parliament Hill—some even named who he might be. The Liberals were doing their best to put in their last shot after 16 years of uninterrupted power. Pierre Trudeau's protégé people scolded “We'll be back” in lipstick on the mirror in their own to be vacated office. (Not much later the same group wrote “Welcome Back” on the Dipper minister's mirror when Clark and Trudeau changed offices again.) Etienne Hébert, then an MP from Sudbury, Everyone seemed to agree Hébert would be in the new cabinet, given his loyalty to Clark and the bridge he'd been to party soon-to-be Disraelier. The Conservative got upset, and others, and Hébert was sure the situation never got out of hand.

Hébert, who made his name by being one of Sudbury's top lawyers, claimed he was part of the inner minister. The night before the new government was to be sworn in, he was summoned to Ottawa, and told that he would be in the inner circle. He called me—we'd been friends for years—“so what” I was hearing exaggerated

he drop by, when he arrived I looked him in the eye and asked, “What do you know about Energy?” I thought he was going to pass out. Energy was the political hot potato of the time, the Tories had promised to sell Petro-Canada, the crown oil company, and the arrangement was to be contentious. Hébert would be the first to admit the Energy portfolio, which he did get the next day, wasn't a career moment for him.

Which is all to say that there are going to be some disgruntled faces in the next few days when Paul Martin announces his cabinet, even on some who will be in it. Cabinet-making isn't easy—they are only a few senior positions, but lots of people who think they're qualified. And of course when you get to the full cabinet, there simply are not enough limousines on Parliament Hill to chauffeur the egos who feel they should be seated in or in one. Even some who may be worthy of a position won't get because of regional, ethnic and gender considerations.

You are going to hear a lot of names over these next few days—many of them dusted for mention. Remember that someone to be PM is the old finance minister who made numerous financing mistakes. By the time his budget was introduced in the House of Commons, there was actually only one item unspent left—something to make it look like the whole process had been secret. I might be wise to repeat the same here.

As for Hébert, whom we last knew a year ago now, he eventually did get a dream job of justice when Brian Mulroney was handing out his cabinet positions a few years later. But he never forgot his excruciating time in Energy. We were fence golf competitors over the years, and whenever he was up for award, I'd whisper “Perry Can” during his backhand, “Take your

“  
When he wanted to know what I heard and I asked, ‘What do you know about Energy?’ I thought he was going to pass out.”

## Passages

**HONOURLED:** Sgt. Robert Short, 42, a model soldier and platoon leader who was killed by a land mine in Afghanistan on Oct. 3, was chosen, posthumously, by his peers for the Canadian military's highest Valor Award for outstanding leadership.

**REVIEWED:** *Maintain* by Robert Short, 42, a model soldier and platoon leader who was killed by a land mine in Afghanistan on Oct. 3, was chosen, posthumously, by his peers for the Canadian military's highest Valor Award for outstanding leadership.

**QUITTING:** John Manley, the minister of finance who, perhaps too vigorously, challenged Paul Martin for the Liberal leadership, stepped down in July, and he would not run in the next election. A former foreign affairs minister, the 53-year-old Ontario MP was Jean Charest's most prominent troubleshooter.

**SELECTED:** Camille James, a 45-year-old single mom with two grandchildren, is the new leader of B.C.'s NDP opposition, a party with no seats in the legislature. A Metis who was a school trustee, James is believed to be the first Aboriginal person to lead an established political party in Canada.

**WIDE:** Queen's University physicist Arthur McDonald, 60, won the prestigious Gérard-Harting medal for science, an award that guarantees him \$1 million in research funding over five years. McDonald heads the Sudbury Neutrino Observatory, which studies the tiniest elements of the universe.

**NAMED:** Louise Alice Elizabeth Mary Moorsom-Windor, the Queen's sixteenth grandchild and the first child of Prince Edward and his wife Sophie, was finally brought home and entered after 15 days in hospital. She will be known as Lady Louise.

**DIED:** Warren Spahn, the greatest left-handed pitcher of all time, was a stalwart of the powerful Milwaukee Braves club in the 1950s. He died at his Milwaukee home of 82.

# 'THE JIHAD SUPERBOWL'

Embedded in Iraq, ALEXANDRE TRUDEAU finds misgivings among American troops

**OF THE TWO GREAT RIVERS** flowing through Iraq, the Euphrates is slower and bluer. It cuts into the country from Syria, curving across Iraq's western desert as it heads toward the Mesopotamian flood plain in the south. Along its shores, the river provides one continuous oasis through an inhospitable wasteland, a channel of life bands which ancient villages are spliced out.

The town of Fallujah is 90 km west of Baghdad. From there on up, the Euphrates hosts innumerable little farming communities, inhabited by Sunni Muslims. From Baghdad to Ramadi, along the Euphrates, the villages form the eastern side of what the Americans

call the Sunni triangle. This is the heartland of the resistance to the American occupation.

Hanging loosely, I'm embedded with the American forces. Since the beginning of the war, what impressed me was the sheer size of Iraq's civilian population, not the resistance that came to deliver it. But eight months into the American pressurized war, I feel compelled to scrub myself with them (shyly before George W. Bush's surprise visit) to have a look at what the Americans see all about. My Iraqi friends are anxious to hear what I might gain from spending time with the wrong and also forces that now control their country and pristine freedom. I could think of no better place to experience firsthand the Sunni triangle, along the banks of the Euphrates. Like Tigris to the north, the river flows from Ramadi and Babil to have been a hub of irrigation.

On a dreary day, I arrive in Fallujah in search of the Americans. It is a scary place. Unlike other big towns in central Iraq, American soldiers are nowhere to be seen: no checkpoints, no roadblocks, no patrols. Local police are hunkered down behind sandbags, concrete walls and barbed wire. There is graffiti everywhere. It reads "Go OK around these the Americans. It is OK to kill Americans." Or, "Blessed is he who kills Americans." And,

get stuck in traffic," I tell Ammar. He begins chain-smoking.

The American base is several kilometers outside of the city, the barracks over 1,000 m inside the outer walls. At the gate, I wait for the appropriate official to take me in. It is cold. The boys at the gate are almost delirious. "Come, place, isn't it?" they say, and laugh. "American you are not in Fallujah living short!" I tell them. One of them replies, "I'd rather be shot dead than stuck here."

Over I go inside, a friendly soldier telling me, "in Fallujah, we have decided to let the Iraqi authorities look after the towns themselves. The Iraqi guys occasionally cry and shout at us with artillery or mortars. But you see how far we are from the outside walls. We're far for them to reach properly. Plus we can acquire mortar or artillery rounds and respond instantly." I ask him to explain what he means by "acquire." "We triangulate the origin of the projectile while it is still in the air and fire right back on the position with deadly force," he says.

I also visit their medical facilities. The base's chief medical officer explains that they are equipped with all they need, including a dentist and a psychiatrist. "This way we don't and anybody here that we can treat here. With as many soldiers already deployed, we have to preserve manpower," the doctor says. "Top military officials have promised to station over 100,000 new soldiers in Iraq next year; to replace the 150,000 currently serving there who will be going home shortly. It is true to be a real aque-

site than Fallujah. The Americans have camped in one of Uday Hussein's fishing palaces on the banks of the river. Inside, I am lodged in an ornate sunroom, a veritable oasis of many new comforts into banality. My bunkmates are unusually glad to the interview to see whether "the Bachelor" will shoot to marry the blonde or the brunet in the show's final episode.

Resound in a headquarters base. To experience aerial operations, the next morning I travel even further up the Euphrates. A hundred kilometers north, a vast expanse set of the river basin at the beautiful town of Al-Habbaniyah. It goes through a valley of a dozen plains, and at the end of it is a solid stone American Al-Azad air force base, now being used by US forces. GM MiG jet fighters are strewn across the valley floor, each half entombed in the ground. One theory holds that Saddam, in his numerous conflicts, was reluctant to use his jet fighters for fear they might be destroyed in combat. So he buried them. Now they sit in their individual graves, slowly deteriorating in the desert.

Afraid was back with funding from Ya-

grakis, and features a sports centre, the arts and indoor swimming pool. Along the edge of the valley, hangars have been cut into the cliffs. On top of the plateau is a series of runways and berms.

Once again I am greeted cordially by the American soldiers. I sit park chopsticks hand a fragrant meal. All eyes are focused on the big-screen television in the latest Michael Jackson video on repeat.

## GRAFFITI

### everywhere reads: 'Blessed is he who kills Americans' and 'Saddam is a hero of the Arabs'

have for a more peaceful world and are a little suspicious of the American presence here," I repeat. "Igara we just don't quite understand what is happening here and why." He considers this and says, "A good part of my own family is Canadian from New Brunswick. I always have a lot of explaining to do when I see them." Before flying into the desert, we momentarily hover over the camp, taking in its full exposure: dozens of helicopters (including Apache, Blackhawk and Chinook), hundreds of Humvees, and thousands of men to man them all. The officer

continues: "You know that I was the one to introduce the Chinook flight out of here—the one that got shot down over Fallujah the other day? They were on their way to Baghdad, going on leave. They were en route to our way out of here. I tell you we're the first ones to want peace so that we can get the hell out." He pauses. "I don't have all the an-



out of the heart of darkness, the author boards up the Euphrates River by helicopter



American soldiers in northwest Iraq search for hostile militants as part of Operation Tiger Strike. They find two bound wrists.

**THE NEXT BIG BASE** up the Euphrates is in Ramadi, a river that is only slightly less

savers. But answers? Not. I have a job to do."

The helicopter glides over the western desert plain, which goes on without a blade of grass for miles. An eerie industrial complex emerges on the horizon ahead: solar and windmills in the desert have a vision from *Ahead West*. It's a phosphate plant whose production stalled due to sanctions. Beside it is a huge industrial facility. This has been converted into my next destination: Tiger Base.

**IT IS AN IMPRESSIVE** sight, a picture-perfect example of the American military in full operation. At Tiger Base, helicopters are always buzzing overhead, while heavily armored vehicles constantly roll in and out of the camp—high-tech Abrams and Bradley tanks. As I arrive, engineers with plowshares are digging facilities for more vegetables. The soldiers sleep in big, clean-style tents. Rows of them line the abandoned railway tracks. At night, the desert is frighteningly cold. The tents are not heated. Water for showering is in short supply. Now and again, soldiers are served hot meals. There

are no kitchens, no pool table, no entertainment. In the evening, the troops listen to death metal, play video games and read last-boy magazines until it gets too cold to read them. Then they go to bed—bundled and ready.

In the tent next to mine, one young soldier is all too eager to tell me his story. "In the last week," he says, "I been shot at; I been mortared and I nearly been blown up 12 times near from my black site off every night to boot. They didn't tell me all this when I signed up. Goddamn!"

**TIGER BASE** is set up southeast of the Syrian-Iraq border at Al-Qaim on the Euphrates. The Third Armored Cavalry Regiment from Colorado Springs is a few days into Operation Rifles Blitz—a major crackdown on terrorist activities in the region. "We call this place 'the jihad Superbowl,'" the regiment's colonel tells me. "This border area has long been a smuggler's par-

adise. Now it's become a haven for anti-American cell organizers. Through here, they bring people and equipment in and out of Iraq, then pass them down the 'St. Line,' the Euphrates River communities. We are here to disrupt all that." That means raiding off these towns where population totals some 120,000. It means systematically going through everyone in the area looking for weapons, burned communication devices like satellite phones, and wanted persons. It means arresting, suspending,讯问和 foreign So far the regiment has detained over 317

suspects and inspected 3,000 homes. It is an intensive operation.

One night at Tiger Base, down near freezing my ass off, I am invited to the operations area. Donning a helmet and a bullet-proof vest (no per regulations), I am headed into the back of a Bradley. Without its hatch fully, the armored vehicle thunders off



American soldiers patrol the desolate fields beside the banks of the Euphrates, searching for weapon caches.

**'WE WANT** to get the hell out of here,' an officer tells me. 'I don't have all the answers. But I have a job to do.'

# Breakthrough



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into the desert. Due missions through the air vents. After a good half hour of reding and eeling, the vehicle stops and the truck hatch is dropped. Outside, more desert.

The commanding officer gathers for their orders. They're a rough, composed bunch. As they talk, artillery fire sounds out. Some captured location has surely just been infiltrated. In the distance, flares shoot into the air. Pointing to a map, the officers list off what areas have been covered and what has been found. They also describe how much in area has been passed over, since every houseful of Iraqis was searched and found to be in complete agreement given US\$20. Every informant a paid for useful information.

After that, I am loaded into another Bradley and soon after dropped off in the middle of a row of tanks, angled in a defensive pattern. Clay lights notable on the horizon. For the young man here, Tiger Blood is healthy, sometimes sleepless, relatively easily. The captain sends me on to the village of Sadiq with a tank platoon. Trade in a Flamin' Joe, which is driven between tanks to prevent us from running. The desert path to town has been ground to a fine dust by armoured vehicles. We travel in the following darkness at an artificial slow speed.

In the village, a severe curfew is in place. Anyon seen in the streets between dusk and dawn will be arrested or shot. My Harpoon takes position on altitude and just outside of town on the edge of the fortified between the village and the river. We're there to enforce the curfew. Our tool for observation is a piece of classified equipment: a laser sighting device mounted on the Harpoon's arm. It can project a prism 20 km away. "What you see is not light, but electrons converted into images," the sergeant or plane. I focus on the minaret of a little mosque, somewhere across the river and press the range button. The device tells me that the object is 17.485 m away. "The next step will be to relay that information by satellite to our 'hotshots,'" he says. "So up to a range of 20 km, jets from now, one of these soldiers will return and be baited by the river—and the memory of the young man who once walked along its banks without really seeing."

date to become our enemy ever again."

At dawn, I join a group of four soldiers who are doing door-to-door searches in the village we've been observing, or the "area," as the troops refer to it. It doesn't appear dangerous. In the valley between the desert hills, the Euphrates meanders. On its banks, people have irrigated plots of wheat, corn and onions. They lead their herds out to graze in the grasses by the river. In their gardens grow oranges, grapes and date palms.

The young soldiers enter people's compounds with a mix of incense and ayahuasca. As they march in, gapping their weapons, they unashamedly tell the inhabitants "Peace be with you!" to break the ice. Young girls nervously watch American

prod them through their household belongings. Old men smile as they have seen it all before. In my helmet and fatigues, I might as well be a soldier, and give up trying to speak with these people.

This is Operation Iraqi Freedom in full swing. When arrests are made, the suspects' hands are tied and they are made to wear a bag on their heads. They are then driven out of town to the desert corner, a broad off plot of land in the desert. The detainees are given two blankets each. They huddle together for warmth at night. They remain there for days.

Between the Americans and the Iraqis there is such misunderstanding. From within their massive military machine, the American soldiers don't really understand what they are doing in Iraq. It is not surprising that the Iraqis cannot comprehend what the Americans are up to, or relate to freedom the U.S. claims to offer. To reach out, the Americans need to appreciate the splendour—and level of goodness—granted to these people by the Euphrates. To reach out, the Americans have to show some appreciation for the things that move Iraqis—and some reverence to their ancient humanity.

For now,

the gap between the two only

grows wider. Perhaps, years from now, one of these soldiers will return and be baited by the river—and the memory of the young man who once walked along its banks without really seeing.



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Turks protest against terrorism near the British consulate in Istanbul. A man performs Friday prayers in the Blue Mosque (top).

# ON THE EDGE

As it tries to join the EU, the nation is experiencing a rise in anti-Western sentiment

**THINGS FALL APART.** If fabled Nigerian author Chinua Achebe had been Turkish, nothing would be more fitting today than the title of his most famous novel. In Turkey, where manipulating the subtleties of appearance has been the mastery of the political elite, things have begun to unravel after a series of devastating terrorist bombings in Istanbul.

The timing couldn't be worse: The four massive attacks against synagogues and British interests in the heart of Istanbul left more than 10 dead and scores injured. And with Turkey fighting a uphill battle to join the European Union, the fallout from those acts of terror threatens to destroy the image the country's leaders have so relentlessly tried to build since modern Turkey emerged from the rubble of the Ottoman Empire. Nothing can be more painful than realizing being held—reality in this case being the complex mosaic of religious and cultural strife, political intrigue and cover-up, that has lurked beneath Turkey's projected state of calm for decades.

It's a harsh rate of events for a nation seeking international legitimacy. Not that the recent past has been peaceful. Turkey's relationship with its Kurdish minority, centered in the southeast, has been bloody, with violent uprisings first begun in the mid-1990s and a military campaign against guerrillas of the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) that eventually resulted in the capture of PKK leader Abdullah Ocalan in 1999. Through the 1990s and into this decade, there were also terrorist attacks, not only by the PKK

but also extremist Islamic groups and left-wing organizations. Many people believed that a massive government sweep in 2009 against one extremist group, the Turkish Hezbollah [it is distinct from the organization based in Lebanon] had largely eradicated the terrorist threat in Istanbul, a staunchly secular Islamic metropolis and one

**IN ISTANBUL,**  
a city viewed as a bridge  
between East and West,  
Western influence is now  
seen as overly pervasive

that prides itself on its religious tolerance. Now, the recent attacks in Istanbul have reopened wounds that have never really had time to heal.

And, inevitably, defiance has set in. On Istanbul's crowded streets, no one is willing to concede that the problems facing

Turkey in its critical time are anything more than isolated anomalies, imported into the country from the outside. "This was nothing," insists Arsin Alkin, running inside the terrorist front in a mostly Armenian district less than 100 m from the devastated British consulate attacked by suicide bombers on Nov. 26. "I don't think it will happen again. Very few things will happen again. Look at everything we are shopping—no one is hiding."

But the grain reality is that the avago-

istic world is also present in Turkey. The victory of an Islamic fundamentalist party in the last national election in November 2002 as an indication of the direction Islamic revolution in Turkey has taken in Istanbul, perhaps not the rule Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan's Justice and Development Party (AK) enjoyed success in this city long viewed as a bridge between East and West—but one where Western influence is now coming to be seen as overly pervasive. That could be felt even from an offbeat neighborhood such as Taksim. "Many people here were becoming suspicious of the boom in bars and clubs," says Juremat, a local tour guide and tour guide. "They were upset by the flood of foreign products and advertising, as they voted for the AK." Since taking power, though, Erdogan's government has toned down much of its pro-Western rhetoric. And that may be largely due to fears that the army, the guardian of Turkish secularism, would turn any trend toward Islamization of the country.

Many of Istanbul's residents now feel betrayed by the government. The reforms they'd hoped for, such as loosening restrictions on free speech that have helped stifle Muslim activities, have not materialized, and anti-Western sentiment continues to rise. Yes, there were demonstrations in Istanbul and Ankara against the recent bombing, but they were tinged with anger toward the U.S. and allies. "This is all because of our government's closest ally to the U.S.," says Ferhat Salor, a 46-year-old oilfield engineer in Taksim. "When I voted for the AK, I thought they

would bring back some of the Islamic values we'd lost over the past few years. Instead, we have a government that prioritizes itself in the U.S., and not to Allah."

Fetullah, like other Turks who have been swept up in the Islamic-nationalist movement, has had time accepting that true Muslims could be behind the recent attacks. Instead, he sees a possible cover story. "Turkey is a part of Europe," he argues, "and Europe is becoming strong. Maybe Americans worried about this and want to see our country destabilized." But theories such as these gloss over some of the fissures in Turkey's diversity, ones that the government and the army have tried to keep from surfacing.

Not an easy task now, in light of the bombings. The secular religious divide is under intense scrutiny, at home and in the international arena, where Turkey continues its efforts to join the EU. (The EU has said that, among other things, Turkey has to improve its human rights record.) In his defense of Islam's main mosque, the Aya Sophia, which also bears his name and finds its place of worship not to be used, others often cut before offering his opinions. He argues that secularism is only window dressing for a society that is more like like him. But religious affairs, he explains, are severely controlled by the government, and citizens, who are government-appointed, are banned from talking about religion with the media. "But this is only for the sake of appearance," he says. "This is an Islamic country. Turkish people are devout Muslims, not fundamentalists, but they believe in the Quran and the teachings of the prophet Muhammad."

Even the secularism of the Turkish army only goes so far, he insists. "You know my demand, the army does not exist as a nation. The soldiers, the officers, even the generals of Muslim Turks. The government is blind." He means that "no one in Turkey really believes that Muslims could have carried out the attack." As for who did do it, the reader will not venture a guess. But, he adds in a final note: "I will say that much fundamentalism has nothing to do with Islam. It is a weird mind by the West. Why do people talk so much about Islamic



Explosion hits a bank (below) as well as the British consulate and two synagogues

teria? What about Jewish terror in Palestine? Or Christian terror in Ireland?"

For many of Turkey's religious leaders, Islamic extremism obviously doesn't come here. This view, of course, ignores the hundreds murdered by extremist groups over the past decade. And there are other skeletons in the dark recesses of recent Turkish history, among them allegations that the Turkish government actually made use of Hezbollah to attack Kurdish "enemies of the state" before ending down on the organization. "Hezbollah hates the Kurdish movement because we are very lenient in our approach to Islam," explains Recep, a Kurdish bus driver in Istanbul with strong ties to the Kurdish separatist movement. "They killed hundreds of our leaders, and everyone knows the government helped them."

Recep, who has rallied that his real name not be used, fears that in the wake of the recent terrorist attacks Kurds might become "WHY DO they only talk about Islamic terror? What about Jewish terror in Palestine? Or Christian terror in Ireland?"



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# BLAME AMERICA

We've been accused of souring things, but what about the U.S. attitude?

**FIXING CANADA-U.S. RELATIONS** was supposed to be a straightforward exercise for Paul Martin. Opinion surveys put him ahead every other aspect of his approach to government. (Is he a social justice liberal like his dad or a bottom-line business guy? Will he open our power to MP's or centralize it in a new inter-ministerial office?) On coping with the Americans, though, the prime minister-to-be's approach is widely understood as flatly inept. The premise is that Jean Chrétien mucked things up by needlessly annoying one biggest trading partner. All Martin has to do is improve on that record to act friendly and get the kites of

communication open—or at least, that's been Ottawa's conventional wisdom.

But as Martin's Caucus decided-quality flip on the Maher Arar case showed, avoiding clashes with Washington is not always so easy. His first comment on the troubling saga of the Canadian who was shipped off by the U.S. government to prison and torture in Syria was on message with his standard strategy of cross-border congeniality. On Nov. 20, Martin called Arar's story "tragic," but also stated soothingly, "I must say that I certainly don't understand the American position." Really? Others' reactions are demanding. Even Deputy Prime Minister John Manley—the most competently pro-American minister in Chrétien's cabinet—warned bluntly that Washington's handling of the case jeopardizes Canada-U.S. security co-operation.

So Martin thought again. At a news conference five days later, before even being asked about Arar, he volunteered his new line: "The Canadian passport has to be respected," Martin said, now denouncing the U.S. deportation of Arar as "unacceptable." He even left open the possibility of an inquiry into the affair—as Arar has demanded—after he takes over as prime minister on Dec. 12. And so, as the very first U.S.-level

demand for his attention since he won the Liberal leadership, Martin slipped into the pattern of conflict associated with the outgoing regime. Is it possible that conventional wisdom has it wrong, that Chrétien's chutzpah has not costed all the election? Another explanation suggests itself: *blame America*.

The line of thinking is far from popular these days around Ottawa. Big business's main lobby group, the Canadian Council of Chief Executives, is urging Martin to "re-examine the all important Canada-United States relationship." The aerospace and defence industries are also eager for stronger Canada-

**AN FDA official warned that failure to play ball will lead to Canada being 'kicked in the ass.' How charmingly colloquial.**

U.S. bonds, fearing what will happen to their Pentagon bonuses if Canadians develop a nose for the independent stance Chrétien struck on the Iraq war. Martin pretends more "sophisticated" management of U.S. relations, which sounds fine. The problem is, recent evidence suggests that if greater re-

placement is needed, it's mostly on the other side of the bilateral divide—down Washington way.

Take how John Ashcroft, the hard-nosed U.S. attorney general, has handled the Arar affair. At a meeting with Solicitor General Wayne Easter in Washington, Ashcroft offered no hint of regret, leaving Easter not a millimeter of diplomatic wiggle room when he met reporters to discuss what he had accomplished by visiting. Now, is that the sophisticated way to treat a partner in the war on terror who drops by for a chat?

Or consider Washington's insistence on creating U.S. consumer demand for cheaper prescription drugs from Canada. If the U.S. imposed new restrictions on that booming cross-border trade, Ottawa could hardly object. That's the sort of decision governments get to make. What's hard to accept, though is the attitude of U.S. officials, who seem to think Canada is somehow out of line here. In fact, Canada's iniquity is line with most other Western democracies in holding down drug costs. In the U.S., that's out of step. Yet that's what's disturbed the U.S. Food and Drug Administration from taking cues at Canada's democratic policies, demanding that we end our price-controlling ways. An untrained FDA official was quoted in warning that failure to play ball will lead to Canada eventually being "kicked in the ass."

How charmingly colloquial! If a Canadian staffed the U.S. embassy in Ottawa, there would be more hemming and hawing over U.S. policy on some hot-button issue, the remark would have been pronounced upon as yet another sign of party anti-Americanism. The infamous episode of the Chrétien side



who-called George W. Bush a moron is cited repeatedly in analysis of supposed negligence on the U.S. side. But let's get some perspective. That was a single comment overshadowed by a report—detailed, sure, but hardly evidence of unfeigned disregard of the President. By comparison, the reported bush-indictments for Chretien, "Denz," short for dinosaur, suggest routine snickering around the White House. Canadians accustomed to their politicians volunteering to be subjected to much worse on *The Howard Stern Show*, tend to laugh off this sort of stuff—and rightly so. Still, imagine the hand-wringing if a belching moron for Bush, and inside the Prime Minister's Office, was reported.

But there are more substantial matters at stake than how many political insiders talk about presidents and prime ministers. On one close issue, the Americans doused the leader to Canadian beef to make sure Japan stayed open to their own exports. So much for solidarity in the world's biggest two-way trade partnership. And no thanks

for Canadian civic leaders. Trade battles such as the endless softwood lumber war are far too complex to categorically say who's right and who's wrong, but what can be deserved is that there is little sign of American indifference to consider Canada in anything other than cold-eyed competitive terms.

Admittedly, such dollars-and-cents disputes are overshadowed by the lingering suspicion that Chretien credits his decision to sit out the Iraq invasion poisoned all elements of the Canada-U.S. relationship. Although Leader Stephen Harper has said that may be the real reason Canada didn't get much sympathy from Washington on said one dispute, Harper meant that as a criticism of the Liberals, if he'd said, isn't it really an indictment of the Bush regime? Disagreement about war and peace should be factor into anyone's calculations about trade and commerce.

U.S. Ambassador Paul Cellucci knows better than to make such edifice braggades. He frames the war iff not in economic, but familial terms. "There is no security threat

to Canada than the United States would not be ready, willing and able to help with," he said in his major speech on Canada-U.S. ties in the aftermath of the Iraq invasion split. "We would be there for Canada, part of our family. That's why so many in the United States are disappointed and upset that Canada is not fully supporting us now."

Cellucci can't really have meant the U.S. would blindly follow its northernly ally since Canada didn't threaten. No Canadian would expect such enthusiastic loyalty. What Canada might ask is for a little diplomatic sternness after a Canadian citizen gets tortured, thanks to a U.S. anti-terrorism push. Or for U.S. officials to lighten up on issues like the Internet prescription drug trade. Or maybe, just maybe, for Bush extra support during an agricultural crisis. If Martin can smooth the way to such considerations, his U.S. policy will be a ringing success. But as he has already learned on the Avian issue, sometimes that won't work. More often than he'd like, a Canadian prime minister needs to be ready to blame America.



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# THE PLAY'S THE THING

A new work on London's stage provides insights into Europe's troubles

**AFTER SPENDING** a fortnight trying to understand Europe's dismal economic performance, I finally got it: the play's the thing to catch the terrors of the thing.

British playwright Michael Frayn has also to tell us about the roots of today's economic woes of the Eurozone. The author of the 1989 award-winning *Copenhagen* shows in his latest, *Denmark*, now playing at Britain's National Theatre, how leftist chancellor Willy Brandt enhanced German social programs between 1969 and 1974 that benefit reformers today. Since France and Italy quickly followed the German social-economic

model, Germany's history is crucial for understanding today's Eurozone.

In the global economy imperialists Europe has been also run for years. Why are Europeans so complacent about their dismal performance? Such mega as they matter is aimed at the Americans, not their leaders. If Jacques Chirac and Gerhard Schroeder were CEOs of major companies, they'd have been sacked long ago.

What was to have been a European vacation became a bumper holiday. Instead of just a few minutes' worth of book signings, I ended up spending two days with global investors and spent much of the rest of the time trying to understand why so many people in France and Germany tolerate union employment rules that are higher than 70 percent higher than those that have been driving American voters away from George W. Bush. Why do they accept economic growth rates one-third of the GDP rate that has Democrats competing to Depression II? Robert J. Loeffler?

One must distinguish between the euro zone countries using the euro (not from those EU members sticking with their traditional currencies—most notably Britain). British GDP growth is faster than the eurozone. France, Germany and Italy, and its unemployment rate—a mere 7 percent—is roughly half the German rate, which is only slightly worse than the high joblessness plaguing France and Italy.

The EU is a collective of heterogeneous economies. One GDP rate doesn't fit all, although the Eurostars at the EU's head-quarters in Brussels keep issuing, alone,

taxes and regulations based on the moon-dust principle. Some of the smaller economies, notably Finland and Ireland, boast great growth rates, while the Eurozone Big Three—Germany, France and Italy—have been flailing with recessions when they aren't growing gloriously.

The Eurozone is now the world's second biggest capital market, and the euro is now used worldwide. Its members backed off from military, leaving their governments with less to spend on the good things of life. Problem is that those good things can include full-time pensions after 30 years in the workplace and incredibly generous welfare payments that discourage people from taking jobs that they don't think they'd enjoy, or that would involve

the victory of a socialist party means the Second World War is finally over. He sides with capitalism and assures voters that the advent of fiscal democracy means an era of cooperation—for each other and for the East Germans.

In reality, Brandt was a moderate, and as permitted by Frayn, a powerful and successful change agent. The German economy was strong enough to afford his welfare, and Brandt might have had a third term as chancellor except for the revelation that his closest staff member was an East German spy. By coincidence, at Brandt was launching his transformation of Germany, Gen. Charles de Gaulle was departing as France's leader, and the dominant centre-right party in Italy was feeling the pressure to expand Italy's welfare state. By 1974, democratic socialism was the order of the day. Subsequent electoral victories across Europe by centre-right parties did nothing to roll back the panoply of benefits, and the move toward economic unification of the 1990s gave EU members the chance to expand the scope and reach of red tape and handouts.

Brandt and his allies were probably right for their time. But their infrastructures and superstructures positioned Europe poorly for global competition now driven by free trade, rapid technological change, decreasing demography, and the rise of China, Taiwan and South Korea to economic eminence. So many Europeans have become used to their freedom and prosperity that the attempts to reform by Schröder, Chirac and Italy's Silvio Berlusconi will either be rejected, or will be too modest to do real good. Only somebody as great as Frayn's Brandt could do so much good—and erode such gigantic longer-term problems.

By

**THE over-costly welfare state thrived under socialist chancellor Willy Brandt, perhaps the most charismatic German politician since, well, you know who**

moving out of town. In Germany, social benefits can include such anomalies as never working per year. The good things also already pit protection, not just in government but across the economy, so productivity gains are hard to come by and isolate an ideologically based willingness to accept uneven shadows of the economy that Americans would never permit.

This over-costly welfare state started under Brandt, perhaps the most charismatic politician Germany has produced since, well, you know who. Democracy begins with Brandt taking office, proclaiming

ending demography, and the rise of China, Taiwan and South Korea to economic eminence. So many Europeans have become used to their freedom and prosperity that the attempts to reform by Schröder, Chirac and Italy's Silvio Berlusconi will either be rejected, or will be too modest to do real good. Only somebody as great as Frayn's Brandt could do so much good—and erode such gigantic longer-term problems.

By

Donald Core is chairman of Horwitz Investment Management by Design and of Horwitz Management Associates. [donaldcore.horwitz.com](http://donaldcore.horwitz.com)



## 'A GREAT DIVERTING OF ENERGY'

An Anglican bishop responds to the furor over his blessing of gay unions

**ANGLICAN BISHOP** Michael Ingham of the Vancouver regional diocese of New Westminster was once an avid reader of spy novels. The KGB, he jokes, often rich in right into church affairs. These days, work provides Ingham with the respite he needs. Members of the 80-church diocese voted last year—after long study and debate—to allow the blessing of same-sex unions. "We see ourselves as supporting people who had

long been thrust to the margins of church and society because of prejudice about sexual orientation," he says. In London, England, however, the prelates of the church, with 70 million members around the world, demanded the initiative at a meeting in October. They also said they "deeply regret" the conservation in New Hampshire of Giese Robinson, the church's first openly gay bishop. "I understand attitudes toward ha-

rron sexuality," the prelates warned, "will test the fabric of our Communion at its deepest level." Locally, Ingham's stand has caused a rift with about a dozen conservative priests in nine congregations. He discussed the issue with Vancouver Bureau Chief Ben MacQueen.

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## Q&A | >

so far as I know, is that homosexual acts are sinful. But the reality is that many church in around the world are softening their position.

### Has your view of homosexuality evolved?

I initially was afraid of gay and lesbian people because they presented me with a challenge of my understanding of human nature, my understanding of God's word and the revelation of the Scripture. It was only as I worked with them pastorally that I found that they were so much afraid of me and the tradition of the Church. I began to realize there was a great injustice here. The Church ignores social activity in marriage and then restricts marriage to heterosexual people, and leaves gay and lesbian people with no options other than abstinence or loneliness. I began to see eventually that the sin which the Church needs to pay attention to is homophobia and religiously based prejudice.

### What does the blessing look like and how does it differ from a marriage?

It has some similarities but more differences. It is a public service in church in the presence of family and friends. It involves the making of vows and commitment between the two parties and it involves prayer for the couple and for their life together before God. It is different in the sense that if marriage, by definition, is a union between a man and a woman, this cannot be a marriage because the two people standing there are of the same sex. In the state that I have authorized, there's no exchange of rings or any of the symbols that you would associate with a wedding service. So, it's really a blessing of same-sex unions, not same-sex marriage.

### What has the reaction been?

I only know of two blessings that have happened in our diocese.

### That's it?

Exactly. Much to do about... not nothing, but not as much as people are asking out.

### What would Jesus do?

Jesus, in the Gospels, was a person who went toward people at the margins—lepers, tax collectors, women and people who were despised in the society in which he lived. His last sermon in Nazareth was to proclaim good news to the poor, the prisoners, the blind. Jesus reserved a great deal of his min-

istry, and some of it was quite strange, for the religious establishment of his day, where he accused of being blind guides—knowing the Scriptures but not knowing God. He was crucified by the forces of religious orthodoxy in his day precisely for crossing religious boundaries. So I find it curious that people should say we are somehow not Christian, which it seems to me that the inverse is true.

### There must be a cost to this debate.

Yes, there's been a great diversion of energy all across the world, and certainly here in Canada. We've become internally focused in the Church and we're in danger of losing our sense of mission to the world beyond us. I think there is a deep theological question being worked out. In that sense I'm not discouraged by the turnout.

### Are parishioners sitting on their wallets?

There is an economic cost. We had eight parishes with wait lists for adoption special in 2002. They have not been paying their assessment to the diocese. We're in danger of producing a new budget that has cut our hospital chaplains, for example. It has affected our support of the worldwide mission of the Church, in Northern Canada and overseas.

### How do you deal with the personal ID?

I have drawers full of love mail; the Internet has enabled the technological equivalent of done by shooting. I've had to learn to deal with a level of irrelevance and sheer boredom that I frankly didn't know existed in the Church. But when I lead the Gospel and the life of Jesus, I realize, of course, that it's always been there.

### What is at stake?

I think this conflict damages the credibility of the Church in the wider society. I've heard from many people, particularly younger people, who say, "Why should I join your church if it's so bigoted, so homophobic and so irrelevant? It doesn't feel like a church I want to join." It is internally weakening all of us. And, of course, there's this issue of whether the Communion as a whole will hold together. The genius of the Anglican Church is that we have managed to hold strong differences together within a single church. I think the forces of separation that have been unleashed around this issue are antithetical to the Anglican spirit. ■

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# THE DOCTOR IS IN...PAIN

**Family physicians are fed up with the pressures, and they want to see solutions**

**AFTER YOUR SPOUSE** and perhaps close friend or two, your next most intimate relationship could easily be with your family doctor. After all, the GP often knows things about you no one else does. But does that kind of support at least lead you and your doc to ask each other, "How're we?" says Steven A. Marlow, MD, a family physician by trade and an author with *The Medical Reassurance Project*. In his partnership with The Medical Reassurance Project, Marlow has learned that a certain level of trust between doctors and their patients' understanding of them behind this professional facade, it turns out, fully does not necessarily feel stressed out, overworked, underpaid and underappreciated. And most of their patients haven't a clue how bad the situation has become.

Increasingly aware of complaints from a diverse medical community, we conducted two polls. A mail-in survey sent to 3,500 family physicians across the country measured their attitudes toward their work. By telephone, we queried 1,000 patients nationally on what they thought of family doctors and the care they're getting. The good news is that, across that divide, the two sides are in solid agreement: GPs are still a professional, skilled, dedicated and compassionate bunch. And whatever it's getting under the GPs' skin, it hasn't stopped most of 350 patients from rating their experience in the doctor's office as good or excellent.

**Almost a third of family doctors in our survey feel the quality of care they give their patients has worsened over the past year.**

It's startling how many tell a disturbing tale of decline, frustration and contrary perception. Almost a third of GPs believe the quality of care they give patients—the bottom line in their business—was worsened over the past tumultuous decade. Fewer patients, burnout, significant onset age, feel disease may be well, GPs are more than twice as likely as their patients to feel that doctors' working conditions, social status and job satisfaction have slipped during that same time. That huge level of discontent is discouragingly familiar to the doctor's professional associations—but not because physician behaviour has deteriorated. "Most doctors are now

**Almost a third of family doctors in our survey feel the quality of care they give their patients has worsened over the past tumultuous decade**

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Methodology | HOW THE SURVEY AND POLL WORKS

This report, prepared in partnership with The Medical Post, is based on a national telephone survey of 1,000 adult Canadians who have a family doctor, and a mail-out survey that went to 3,500 family doctors across Canada. National results of the phone survey, conducted by The Strategic Consulting Group Sept. 29 and Oct. 1, are accurate to within ±3 percentage points, 95 times out of 100. National results of the mail survey, based on

responses received by Dec. 14 from 556 mothers, and weighted to represent the actual distribution of family incomes, are accurate to within 2 percentage points. In 16 cases out of 30, MBRP cases, the sample of women is larger than results from subsamples within the national group.

For highlights of the results of the survey and poll, see [www.siliconangle.com](http://www.siliconangle.com).

**20%** of patients say their experiences of their family doctor have worsened over the past decade. 20% of patients in the U.S. feel the same.

**52%** of family doctors say they've seen a decline in the quality of care over the past 10 years. That's twice the rate of the general public.

**60%** of family doctors say income and insurance rates up from 1995 to 2005 are the main reason for the decline. 20% say it's work-life balance.

**90%** of patients say they experience high levels of stress and anxiety when they visit their family doctor.

#### LOSING GROUND

How family doctors feel they've fared this past decade

	WORSED	IMPROVED
Quality of care for patients	22%	30%
Income	18	52
Time spent with each patient	4	72
Job satisfaction	4	86
Overall working conditions	4	96
Ability to see patients in a timely manner	2	98
Time spent on administrative matters	2	96

playing a smaller role in the overall picture since the mid-'90s, doctors need more time—especially reading of patients—as they move from the hospital to their communities, where they'll need follow-up care.

- Provide more hospital beds and specialists to ease the current time GPs spend looking after patients waiting for the extra care
- Provide more home-care nurses
- Provide more support for group practices

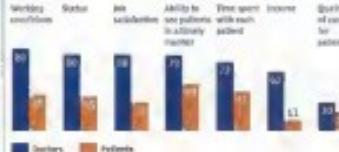
**VANCOUVER** Dr. Wayne Su, 28, has practised for just a year and a half. She thinks it will be hard to get more students to follow her. "It's not something a lot of people aspire to," she says, "especially new grads." One cause of frustration among her peers is the time they spend doing everything but seeing patients. Notably, 60 per cent of GPs say billing and paperwork take between 10 and 25 per cent of their workload—and two in five say that ratio even higher. "If you want to be a responsible family physician," says Su, "a lot of the time is taken up in the examining room. It's coordinating care, contacting other care providers and consultants, writing referral letters, following up on lab work."

The doctor shortage, says Wedel, has already left more than five million Canadians without a GP. That makes the workload for those in practice that much more strenuous, particularly since the average age of GPs is now over 50. "If you look at the demography of the Canadian public and the numbers of doctors we are producing, this is not going to get better," warns Wedel. "In fact it's going to get worse."

A range of questions in our survey bring the issue of bad feelings

#### THE PATIENT-DOCTOR DISCONNECT

Percentage who think these factors have worsened for family doctors over the past 10 years:



#### DOCTORS WHO FEEL STRONGLY THAT THE TYPICAL PATIENT IS...

	PATIENTS	PRACTICE
Trusting of their advice	53	56
Demanding	58	58
Respectful	49	48
Appreciative	48	48
Seeking alternative medicine	30	30
Well-informed	29	29
Impatient	20	20
Complaining	16	16
Misinformed	13	13

**I'd love to see two patients per hour or so, but then I couldn't pay my mortgage'**

—DR. PETER PALMERA, FAMILY PHYSICIAN, PORT MCMURRAY, ALTA.

among family doctors to the freefall nationwide. For starters, there's a strong sense of disappointment in their chosen occupation. Four out of five family docs feel their status has diminished over the past decade. Fully half say their experiences going into the profession have not been met. What's more, given the opportunity, 52 per cent would choose another specialty or their current destination notwithstanding—get out of medicine entirely.

**ON A TYPICAL DAY**, Dr. Peter Palmera sees between 50 and 60 patients. The Port McMurray, Alta., emergency room doctor, who also does clinic work, says the time he spends with each patient and the quality of care he provides have decreased significantly in the past 10 years. Part of the problem is Canada's aging population—older people tend to have more problems that require extra attention, leaving less time for other patients. "You have to see so many patients in order to make it lucrative because you're only paid so much per patient," says Palma. "I'd love to see two patients per hour or so, but then I couldn't pay my mortgage."

Put in that perspective, it's truly remarkable



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**WHAT DOCTORS SAY**  
says few doctors aspire to a family practice

#### MEDICAL MISGIVINGS

Family doctors who find their work satisfying

unsatisfying

Less satisfying than they expected when they started out

10%

Main reasons family doctors feel lower of their colleagues are specializing in general or family practice

Make more in other specialties 30%

PREFER A LESS STRESSFUL MUSCLE 20%

More administrative demands on family practice 20%

able how positively doctors respond when asked if they're satisfied with the work itself. Three out of four doctors say at least "somewhat," including an impressive 33 percent who say "very." In B.C. and Quebec, satisfaction percentages are in the like. At the other end of the scale, at 60 percent, are Ontario. That's where GPs are most likely to see a whole range of negatives in their job (page 46).

While money clearly is at the root of a lot of doctor dissatisfaction, patients have a decidedly different take on things. Two-thirds of doctors think they're underpaid—just 15 percent of patients see them that way. And as long as doctors feel their money isn't up to snuff, they'll feel pressure to take on larger caseloads—and have even less time for each patient—to bring in more income.

A national survey conducted for the College of Family Physicians in 2006 found the average GP working 52 hours a week (plus 17 hours on call), a two-hour increase over 1996. Statistics Canada reports that GPs and PPs, including part timers, had an average net income of \$104,997 in 2006, compared to specialists' \$134,586, although the college cautions these numbers lag on the PP side, and low for specialists.

**HERE'S ANOTHER CHALLENGE** for doctors: solid majorities of their patients don't buy

the notion that they're satisfied and overworked. In fact, from respondents' Gerald Svernak's perspective, doctors have it pretty good these days. "The ones I know now, they want to retire," says the 64-year-old retired painter from Springfield, Mass., 40 km southeast of Worcester. "They get lots of time off, they work out of a clinic and they get holidays. There's nothing wrong with that, but it's a different world we live in now."

Whatever their pay and working conditions, doctors aren't much good if they're not accessible. And four out of five say their ability to see patients in a timely fashion has worsened over the past decade. Half of patients feel the same way, although the rate didn't actually "worsen about the same" or even improved. Doctor Judy McEade, 59, among the happy customers: She and her husband, Chester, 62, from near Glendale, Sask., 75 km south of Saskatoon. Getting in to see her local GP on Outlook, 36 km away, has never been a problem. "We don't run to the doctor for any little cold," says McEade. "But when we're very ill, it's nice to be able to phone up the doctor and say, can we come up the next day?"

Many of the problems the doctors point to now are rooted in the dramatic cuts of the mid-1990s. It's been hard on patients, and hard on the doctors: it's not that the doctors are against change, Westel avows—as long as the required tools are available. Information technology is the key, he adds. "It's one thing that's been shown to improve that connection between what happens in the community and in the hospital," he says. Now a few political signals are sending hope: Ottawa and the provinces may be close to agreement on setting up a national health-care council to assess how the multi-billion-dollar system can be improved. And Paul Martin, the prime minister-in-waiting, has confirmed that the promised will get up to \$1 billion in extra health-care cash—as long as Ottawa doesn't raise deficits. What disgruntled and disengaged GPs were now is a sign that some of that money will go toward improving their lot. ■

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# UNDER PRESSURE

Especially in Ontario, family docs can feel "like slaves and indentured servants"

**FOR ALMOST 20 YEARS,** Dr. Ralph Scandifio practiced on his own as a family doctor in suburban Ottawa. In 2001, he made a difficult decision. Although he cared deeply about his patients, he'd concluded his job was bad for his health, psychic and financial. He'd chronically enjoyed working in a health care system ravaged by the cutbacks of the '90s. "Many family doctors feel like slaves and indentured servants trying to keep up as a resident that requires them to put more and more bodies through a stalled and mired system," says Scandifio, now 63. "The government have cut and cornered us all into this mess."

Scandifio left family practice to spend the senior years of his career as a medical adviser to the Canada Pension Plan in Ottawa. The time had come to take care of himself; he says, although he recognizes he left a lot of his 1,500 patients in the lurch. "I spent several months trying to find doctors to take on a few of them," he says. "Many were taken on, but just as many were left without a family doctor."

When caring people leave others to fend for themselves, it is a sign of despair. Look to the state of family medicine, in Ontario particularly, in 2003. Across Canada, the Maclean's/Medical Post poll uncovered deep dissatisfaction among family physicians, but nowhere more so than in the province. Almost six in 10 are less satisfied with their career choice than they'd thought they would be. Nearly two thirds below their status has worsened significantly in the past 10 years. And then there's



China and India  
These kids don't  
want to be the  
world's servant

money. Many are bitter that their professional body, the Ontario Medical Association, has not managed to negotiate higher fees for them. Only three per cent of Ontario family doctors say their income has gone up in the past decade—down from 10 in the country, that year her it is 10 per cent. “Patients all assume we’re milking them,” laughs Judy Chow, 48, family physician in Guelph. “I find myself frustrated by the increased complexity of the cases I’m faced with, and I’m worried when I hear how much the other specialists earn, and other professionals such as the lawyers and dentists.”

In Kemptville, Ont., Dr. Greg Fenton, 51, says he’d be happy if he got paid more than a wage practitioner. More than half of his gross earnings goes to overhead. Doctors don’t get a pension or benefits. He works seven days a week. “We’ve had times when I feel so exhausted,” says Fenton, 51, “that I wanted to pack it in and do something else.”

Stagnant incomes are likewise the reason for Ontario’s doctors. They’ve had a bad relationship with the government for two decades. A three-week, prison-style doctors’ strike in 1986 left a backlog of “which patients to see today,” says Dr. Ron Malone, a family physician in Peterborough. A further blow came in 1994 when the province imposed strict limits that doctors had control beyond a government-imposed income cap. Meanwhile, dramatic hospital restructuring and health-care layoffs, coupled with severe shortages of new family physicians, left a health system picked to the bone. And as if that’s not enough, family doctors feel overwhelmed by paper work and lagged down by unpaid administrative work.

For all their distress, Ontario’s family doctors don’t seem to be taking it out on their patients. Like their colleagues across the country, they give themselves high marks for compassion, professionalism and dedication—as do the patients. “I feel privileged and blessed to be on a profession I love,” says Chow. “I really feel my patients live.” But she and her husband, David Burr, also family physicians, have constant reminders of the downside of their job. “They would lose our children if we became doctors,” she says of her three, aged 15, 17 and 20, “but they don’t want us. They think we work too hard. Still but true.”

One option that has eased the load for beleaguered family doctors across the country is joining a group practice—usually, sharing duties with other family physicians. Dr. John Brewer is among the many who sing the praises of group practice. A family physician in St. John’s, N.B., who practiced solo until two years ago, Brewer, 46, now works with five other doctors at the St. John Collaborative Care Unit. “We go to work with smiles on our faces,” he says—a far cry from the way he felt as he tried to relate everything to everybody in his own practice. “It was an effort for me to remember what everyone did.”

Several versions of government-backed family health groups are available to physicians in Ontario, but so far doctors have been wary of that potential entourage to their workload. The problem

was against a strained relationship with the provincial government. While Brewer works, reform was demanded by patients and doctors. “The government’s New Brunswick is not forcing change,” he says. “Our whole project started in the community, and doctors added fuel to the idea.” The difference in Ontario, says Brewer, is the perception that group practice is being promoted and managed by a government; the doctors have come to distrust it. For this being a grassroots movement, it hasn’t been an easy sell. “There are 70-page contracts that many doctors feel gives the government too much control over their working lives.”

Also critical of the health network’s concept is the Canadian Family Physicians of Ontario, which claims a membership of 3,500, almost half of all practicing family doctors in the province. It’s urging doctors to hold out for more autonomy than the government is offering. Former premier Mike Harris didn’t help matters when he announced the concept in late 2000. He claimed that the majority of the province’s doctors would be working in that form of group practice with other physicians and health professionals within two years. “That didn’t sit well with physicians,” says Dr. Cal Gorlow, executive director of the College of Family Physicians of Canada in Mississauga, Ont. “It sounded like a disease.” And three years later, the numbers flaunted the doctors’ honesty: 275 per cent have signed up.

Dr. Ruth Wilson, who oversees the shift into these networks as chair of the Ontario Family Health Network, is convinced the concept offers relief for overburdened doctors. But she underestimates their wariness. In other provinces, the notion there appears to be greater support for group practice because it’s similar to the stage of a historical emergence. In Ontario, “we’ve moved beyond theorizing and we’re in the implementation stage.” We’ve said, “This is how you do it.” And sometimes when something is clear and defined, the choices are stark and people feel more comfortable.

In Ottawa, Scarsifio is a case in point. Looking for a way to stay in family medicine, he tried to establish a group practice three years ago. But while the 20 doctors he’d assembled saw how much that 70-page contract would drain on their lives, the plan fizzled. “If I’d been a single-practice doctor I would have stayed on in a family doctor,” he says. “It’s a loss Ontario can ill afford.” □

**TVE** had times when  
I felt so frustrated,  
says one Ontario doctor  
‘that I wanted to pack it in  
and do something else’

Family physicians make an impact on our patients’ lives. “But she and her husband, David Burr, also family physicians, have constant reminders of the downside of their job. “They would lose our children if we became doctors,” she says of her three, aged 15, 17 and 20, “but they don’t want us. They think we work too hard. Still but true.”

One option that has eased the load for beleaguered family doctors across the country is joining a group practice—usually, sharing duties with other family physicians. Dr. John Brewer is among the many who sing the praises of group practice. A family physician in St. John’s, N.B., who practiced solo until two years ago, Brewer, 46, now works with five other doctors at the St. John Collaborative Care Unit. “We go to work with smiles on our faces,” he says—a far cry from the way he felt as he tried to relate everything to everybody in his own practice. “It was an effort for me to remember what everyone did.”

Several versions of government-backed family health groups are available to physicians in Ontario, but so far doctors have been wary of that potential entourage to their workload. The problem

## ONTARIO’S GPS HAVE ISSUES

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# The Medical POSTING

ROGERS

FYI

Moderate exercise  
can lower blood  
pressure, according to

an eight-week study of 207 sedentary adults published in the *American Journal of Hypertension*. The participants were assigned to one of five exercise groups. Working out for at least one hour each week prompted average declines of 12 mm Hg in systolic blood pressure and eight mm Hg in diastolic blood pressure.

(Source: Health After 50, Dr. John Hopkins Medical School)

## Women’s heart attack symptoms differ from men’s

Chest pain may be the telltale of a heart attack in men, but new research shows the key warning signs in women are weakness and shortness of breath.

Women don’t always report those symptoms to their doctor because they attribute fatigue to getting old, or they somehow rationalize how they feel, researchers say. Even when women report these symptoms, they are often treated for depression or something else, and are rarely suspected of having heart disease.

Doctors need to check women for heart disease when they have unexplained fatigue and sleep disturbances.

The researchers surveyed 315 women four to six months after discharge from hospital following a heart attack. The

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# RUSSIA'S POWER POLITICS

**Opposition casts Putin as Czar Vlad going into parliamentary elections**

**I**N MOSCOW's art markets and souvenir stands, T-shirts, posters and paintings bearing the image of Vladimir Putin are hung up alongside traditional winter scenes and portraits of Red Square. This isn't kitschy propaganda. Compared to leaders in some other former Soviet republics—Eduard Shevardnadze was ousted as president of nearby Georgia last week—the Russian president has enjoyed remarkable popularity since his election in March 2000. In recent polls, 70 per cent of the Russians surveyed said they would vote for him. Last year, a pop song called "We're Sovereshnoe" (We're Perfect) got regular radio play. When

Putin named 50 last year, the entire country helped him celebrate. For many Russians, Putin, a former KGB agent, has been a refreshing change from the drunken antics of his predecessor, Boris Yeltsin. A teetotaller and fitness buff, the president has provided the firm hand required for stability and prosperity. Although most Russians are still struggling, the economy has grown, thanks to oil-riches and prices. And while the process remains poor, Moscow, with its many restaurants and designer boutiques, is booming.

But Putin's song is off the sleeves now, and some fear that with the Oct. 25 arrest of Russia's richest man, oil baron Mikhail Khodorkovsky, Putins' head is turning into an iron fist. As the stock market trembles and discussions with big Western oil companies falter, Russian businessmen are getting worried. "It's not good that Khodorkovsky is in prison," said oil dealer Baxtir Husein, 33. "They won't see it."

Khodorkovsky, who until his sanguine following his arrest was head of Yukos, the country's No. 1 oil firm, was denied bail on charges of tax evasion and fraud and now reportedly stands behind bars in a crenelated Moscow prison. Russia's deputy prosecutor general, Vladimir Kolokoltsev, wanted he could remain behind bars for up to two years as the case progresses. That leaves journalists, businessmen and politicians at home and abroad to debate whether the Kremlin's move to snuff out one man among many, over a shoddy deal conducted a decade ago, signals a shift toward authoritarianism in the fledgling democracy. Robert Ancaster, a Canadian lawyer who is on Khodorkovsky's defense team, suggested the pres-

ent was acting as if he was above the law. "That," Ancaster said, "is a very ominous sign to Russia and to the West for the future of democracy in Russia."

But in a country where old women have to beg on street corners to supplement poverty pensions, and where state-paid doctors and nurses are forced to take private clients instead of state, there isn't much sympathy for Khodorkovsky, who wealth is estimated at US\$8 billion. He's one of a handful of multi-billionaire oligarchs who scooped up state-owned assets auctioned in controversial privatization deals in the

## AS the stock market trembles and discussions with big oil companies falter, Russian businessmen are getting worried

1990s. Putin had kept control of Yukos group through a tax agreement to leave their businesses alone if they stayed out of politics. He hasn't been afraid to take them on individually: oil magnate Roman Abramovich and Vladimir Gusinsky were called in during their TV stations to criticize the president. But he pats his fighters coolly; in a democracy as fragile as Russia, the influence of these men, as a group, is enough to mount a formidable opposition.

Khodorkovsky, however, ignored the rules. While global giants Exxon Mobil and Chevron Texas were bidding for his business, and with Yukos confirming to international accounting standards that gave the company added luster, he may have felt

unanswerable. Ahead of the Dec. 7 parliamentary elections and a presidential election scheduled for March, Khodorkovsky criticized Putin publicly, donated to Duma opposition parties and was rumored to be considering a run for the presidency in 2008. Warnings—the July arrest of one of Yukos' key shareholders, Filimon Lebedev, and searches of Yukos offices—did not silence him. Finally, Khodorkovsky was arrested on a Siberian runway while his private jet was on a refueling stop.

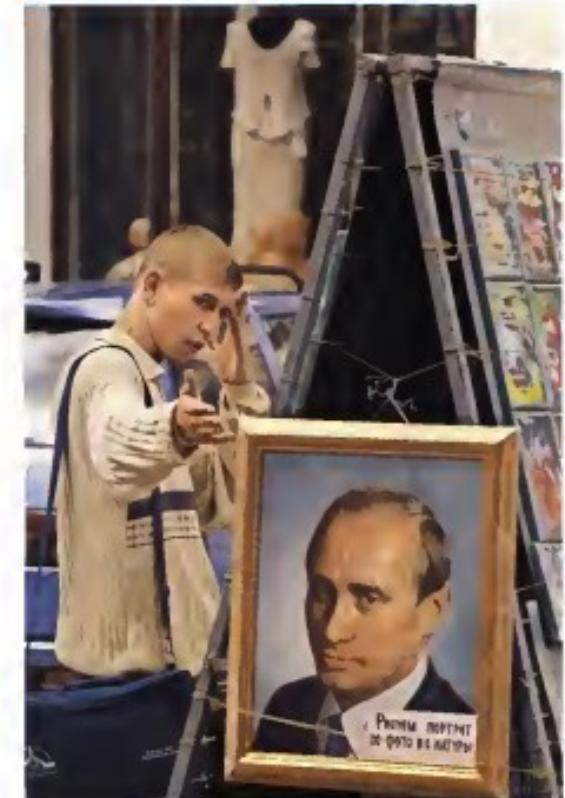
It now seems inevitable that his case will go to trial, which puts Putin in an uncomfortable position. With opposition newspapers across the land such as "Capitalists with Stalin's Face," the Kremlin may have created in Khodorkovsky a political and economic martyr—who may now be considering challenging Putin for the presidency in March instead of 2008. But to back down would make the Kremlin appear indecisive, a fatal error in a country where strong leaders are revered.

The rest of the only state in Putin's record,

young Russian energies are still dying in the war in Chechnya, where fighting has continued for the better part of a decade. Suicide bombings and hostage takings by Chechen rebels have moved the conflict from the capital. Metal detectors and rifle bags at large public gatherings are now routine. The Kremlin tried to enact a law requiring media reporting on candidates during the current parliamentary election campaign for seats in the Duma. But that law was struck down in October by the Constitutional Court because it infringed on freedom of speech, so as the election nears, opposing parties are fully exploiting Khodorkovsky's arrest in an effort to gain support.

Still, the United Russia party, which backs Putin, is expected to win. In fact, United Russia's confidence in leader, former Minister Boris Gryzlov, has had its members will not participate in televised debates because there are no serious rivals. "We have nothing to debate and no one to debate with," he said. And in Moscow, head of the Moscow Centre for Strategic Studies, says Putin has nothing to worry about. "I don't think he really needs to boost his popularity before the parliamentary election," Prokhorov says. "He'll have no problem winning the election."

Putin is milking no chances. The Duma's support is critical if he is to proceed with their economic reforms. So Putin's signature is on pro-Uzbek Russell billboards all around Moscow. He also deleted house at



Portraits illustrate Putin's popularity, but his run-in with Khodorkovsky could hurt

the Kremlin, an often-helped when presidential administration head Alexander Voloshin, a follower from Yeltsin's "team," resigned to protest the arrest of Khodorkovsky.

The reaction to the move against Khodorkovsky, though, clearly demonstrates the divide that still exists between ordinary folk and the wealthy business class and intelligentsia. Many Russians, cynical about what to expect from government, are happy the Kremlin is going after an oligarch who, like some other leading businessmen, built his empire by buying state assets at auctions that were often fixed. "Why does only one have to be targeted while the others go on unscathed?" said Alexei Stavik, 30, a video vendor who says his major disappointment in Putin is that he's not doing more to combat corruption.

Though young Russians embrace capitalism, seniors tend to look fondly on the Communists, who, when there was no money about the price of bread going up, making ends meet after retirement. Still, they are loyal to Putin, who has honed patience—not courage, but it helps—and stabilized inflation rates. Out rockin' her grandfather's on a swing in Almaty's Senate Park, Anna Tsyrova, 77, says there now hope that he'll try to improve, as she'll support Putin in the presidential election in March.

"I think what's happening is good," she says. "Everyone says his right-hand's he's doing." Except, perhaps, those looking anxiously over their shoulders and waiting for the Kremlin's next move.

Carolynne Wheeler is a freelance journalist based in Moscow.





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## THE SENSITIVE SAMURAI

Iron Tom goes looking for his inner warrior in a spectacular period epic

**EVERYWHERE YOU LOOK**, it seems, Hollywood is turning Japanese. First there was *Loy* in *Thelma & Louise*, with Kim Basinger singing karaoke in downtown Tokyo. Then came *Kill Bill*, with Uma Thurman as an assassin samurai who slices her way through a jaded borg in a Japanese night-club. Now it's Tom Cruise's turn, in *The Last Samurai*, a *Vietnam* homage to *Kurosawa*. Hollywood's top gun goes to Bushido boot camp and sets out to prove that the sword is nobler than the machine gun. The intense period piece comes from Edward Zwick, who directed *Glory* (1989) and produced *Shakespeare in Love* (1998), and like those

two films, it glows with Oscar pedigree. But its magnificently spectacled curtain is also a legend-in-the-making, after all, it's the tale of an American war hero who endures his genocidal past by serving as military quartermaster for a army of broken fighters in a foreign land.

The timely 1868 Captain Nathan Algren (Cruise) is suffering from post-traumatic amnesia syndrome. After helping defend the Plaza India, he's now a fractious hill patrol hawking Winchester rifles, while using whisky to blot out nightmares of massacring native children (imagine a post-Vietnam drama set in the 18th century). Algren is one step from the gutter when the Japanese emperor dispatches to him Japan's first modern army of conscripts, marshalled to crush a samurai rebellion against Western values. As a U.S. adviser, Algren is officially a non-combatant (figures, shades of Vietnam). But he fights like a tiger—until he's captured by samurai vassals kidnapped off to a rebel village to the resistance. To Japanese Shingen Ito, with radiant glasses and freckled skin,

instead of killing his prisoner, the same warlord, Katsuamoto (Kosuke Watanabe), chooses to study him. He houses Algren with his sister, maddening Taka (Naoko), whom the American killed her husband in battle. As she tenderly sores up his wounds, and denies him alcohol, it's as if the strung-out soldier has landed in a faraway dream come-to-life. She bathes in hot springs and learns to appreciate the beauty of blossoms. Playing surrogate dad to Taka's children, he teaches them baseball, they teach him Japanese, and soon Tom is aping along with subtitles. During a winter of captivity, an Algren amalgam tries to master the art of swordsmanship,

he even rehearses his macho posture long enough to do a little *Samurai* cross dressing. In other words, Cruise becomes Iron Tom, the *Samurai* Samurai.

Along side John Logan (*Gladiator*), Zwick co-wrote the script with Marshall Herskovitz, together they created *Disorderliness*, the '90s TV show that foreshadowed a template for a "new" post-feminist American male. With this tale of a man looking for his inner self, an warrior, and inner peace, he's still trying to get it right.

Just last week I reviewed *The Mummy*, another movie about a what man who goes to

the past to find out what dialogue. *The Last*

*Samurai* is a more comprehensive pleasure. Cruise, an actor who performs like an eager adolescent, rises to the challenge of a highly phys-

ical assignment. In the title role, the charismatic Watanabe quietly steals the movie. And Terence Stamp makes the best of his stock character, a blustery colonial line.

The film's meticulous period detail is often violated by anachronistic set-pieces. As Algernon harasses his new Zen dojo to the beats of rugged individualism, I find we're being transported into America's nostalgic search for an admirable war. That's hard to swallow, especially in these times, but I couldn't resist the sheer beauty of pre-modern swordsmanship—the arborescent theory of swordplay, the fluidity of arrows darting through the sky, the bark-like scales of tribalaceous. As the samurai army is born to robes by history's first machine guns—early weapons of mass destruction—Stamp shoots the courage as low-slung rape, a pageant of death.

In an odd twist, Algren's samurai courage impresses Japan's young imperial, summoning him from a wizened old leader willing to stand up to the West—which sets the stage for the rise of Japanese imperialism. In its rush to embrace the old glory of war, this movie may the movie never finds time to address.



Watanabe (left) and Cruise walk through a field of blossoming trees in a scene from *The Last Samurai*.

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# VOILA, A HIT NOVEL

Once a Québécois best-seller reappeared in English, it really took off

**GIL COURTEMANCHE** can be excused for not fully believing, yet, what is happening to him. Not so long ago he was, to put it mildly, a has-been in aging, ill-treasured, leave-out-the-wine wine-tasting-and-broke, too, after one fight too many with Radio-Canada cost him his job as a foreign correspondent in the mid-1990s.

Now, thanks to a convert book, a bit of luck and a timely government subsidy, Courtemanche, 60, is Canada's newest and brightest literary star. His first novel, *A Sunday at the Post* (Anansi), first published in French in 2005, with an English version following earlier this year, is being translated into 14 languages and released by the major progressive publishing houses worldwide. But it has already generated royalties and advances in excess of \$400,000 total. Courtemanche is just on a brief whirlwind promotional tour in Europe, and in Mexico that week. He's now a name in literary circles in Canada, Denmark, Sweden, Spain and Ireland. The Times of London and the New York Times both gave him long, lavish reviews.

Courtemanche now enjoys a status that could have made him rich if he'd stayed home. One night, they get off to McInnis, Manitoba where the Canadian ambassador treats him to an official dinner. "The diplomats used to run away from me, now they invite me," says the rugged-faced, heavy-smoking writer. "It feels like a kid opening gifts non-stop."

The novel is a good read, at once an earnest love story and a somber, politically sly descent into the hell that was AIDS-plagued St. Vital when the build-up to the horrible



Courtemanche was broke, burnt out, and now he's an international literary star

Rwanda genocide of 1994 was gathering momentum. But the story of how *Un dimanche à la poste* (which finally achieved international status in that of a long shot winning big) and a viral illustration of the randonneur that can speak a Québécois novel in the international publishing world. "This is a Québécois book—it kept bouncing back when we expected it to leave," says Pascal Assanthyry, head of Montréal's Éditions du Joural, which first published the book in the fall of 2000. Initial print runs: 2,400 copies. "It's a good book," says Assanthyry, "but it is also a difficult book. Finally, we didn't expect to do much better." It did do better, much better, selling 40,000 copies in the province alone. But despite that success, it failed at the Frankfurt Book Fair in 2001. "We circulated copies [in French] everywhere," recalls Assanthyry, "but it generated little interest." No big deal, no deal.

But Louise Denney, executive publisher of Knopf Canada, can read French, and she liked the book. She wouldn't, however, fork over all the cost of a translation. So Assanthyry applied for and won a \$10,000 grant from the Québec government to



A Sunday at the Post (Anansi, Knopf Canada, \$29.95)

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# ALL DOLLED UP

Whether a baby or a fashion doll, you're nothing in Toyland this year unless you're fully accessorized

**ACCESSORIZE!** Accessorized Accessorized! It's not just a fashion mantra—it's the sine qua non for today's doll manufacturers. Fashion dolls, of course, have lived by it ever since Barbies started flying off the shelves in 1959. But even for your child's infant dolls, the latest in beachwear, diaper bags and car seats is now also *à la rigueur*. In fact, two of the Canadian Toy Testing Council's top picks this year are just that: infant doll accessories: the Baby Born jogging stroller and Baby Born mini-world (a sort of dollhouse

including modular "seasonal and collectible play environments") And it's no coincidence that the only doll to make that list, Mattel's tiny raggedy Madge, has a homegrown "accessory"—a plastic new born baby tucked into her shell-shaped nursery, which in turn matches magically to her otherwise trim and perfect midriff.

Kids love to play with accessories. Four-year-old Nicole Logothetis from Steeleye Creek, Ont., is a good example. Her mom, Melinda, says that she walks into a corner with at least one fashion doll, starts a conversation, changes their outfit and puts them on horses ("Calgary's Clear Blue," she does, once does much the same; only her Barbies prefer motoring to horseback riding). And she sometimes arranges her own doll to do the action. "It's the 'big moment,'" says her mom Anne Hergert, "because it's so real."

Playing with accessories and role playing (especially dressing), says council executive director Leigh Poirier, are the two things kids most often do with dolls. In fact, the secret to Madge's success may well lie in re-inventing those. Styling, popular infant doll lines like Zapf Creation's Baby Chou Chou, Baby Born) and Candie work both angles. Younger children, says Poines, love to use functional accessories like cribs and strollers that are just as practical for caring for baby. But (nursing can take a back seat. For senior dolls, the point is simply to collect them. Polly Pocket, Strawberry Shortcake and Groovy Girls—and their countless accessories—are true status treasures that remain hot sellers in Canada this year. In these cases, the logic of accumulation is well rightness: their names; this holiday season, this is in vogue as Groovy Girls, Daphne, Brinksi and Diana rule their debut.

Now that parents appear to bulk it forkling over the money. Although the Canadian Toy Association can't knock down what proportion of the \$1.45 billion national toy market goes to dolls and



accessories, the dollar amount is clearly significant. Paul Emery, owner of Vancouver's Toybox, estimates a sales up to eight per cent of his business. He expanded his doll accesssories two years ago, partly because of the high demand for Groovy Girls, which entered the market in 2000. Their continued appeal, says Lib Stamps, owner of Toronto's Treasure Island Toys, is particularly impressive given that their maker, Manhattan Toys, doesn't advertise or distribute them in Canadian mass-market

stores. Her take on it? They're friendly, accessible (\$14.99 and—big surprise—"seasons of accessories," she says, picking up the Girls' new pet, Sooty Bear, a fellow who's mangled into a faux-fur buster that sells for \$12.99).

Candie buying habits have also spiced the interest of Sandra Crawford, president of Orlando, Fla.-based Zapf Creation (U.S.) Inc. Since introducing babies to high-volume stores in 2001, she says, Zapf has experienced "tremendous" triple-digit growth; much of it because—outpacing our counterparts south of the border—are snapping up the accessories, at a rate of 2.1 per every doll sold. "Canadian consumers," she adds, "are more advanced. They understand the expanded play patterns" that go along with accessorizing dolls.

Well, aren't we smart—savvy consumers who'll drop \$49.99 for the Barbie de Swan Lake unicorn carriage, and a top stash has thus

season. More suburban than those accented with diamonds, the Americans, who can't agree on a doll-holding corner with adjustable straps or a sparkly kitchen set? But our neighbours to the south aren't immune to accessorizing fever. In recent years, U.S. girls have been gaga over the pipsquees (\$5.99 each), Mattel-owned American Girl line, in Chicago and New York City mansions devoted to that franchise alone. Not only can they buy American Girl matching doll-owner clothes, but they can take their alternative friend for afternoon tea, to a hair salon or to fell hospital.

Critics have long bemoaned the repetitive messages doled out to girls (yes, 31 years after Mattel Thomas released *Barbie's Doll*, a hit song about little girls who raise doll-loving boys, the world of dollmania hasn't gendered). And those concerns are still well placed. While there may now come with a variety of post graduate degrees, body essentially hasn't changed in 44 years—vastly measure the equivalent of 39 to 35, but in response to criticism Mattel in 1998 made one version of lifeless bodies and another. Even more disturbing, critics went to be the last thing on the mind of the hot new so-called hip-hop dolls, such as Mattel's Flava line, pushed into development earlier this year after the not-so-successful debut of McDonald's Rap-a-Roll. The much racier Flava and Bratz dolls are way more into fast cars, boys and moonlights than jobs, sports or school.

Most dolls are among the latest "commodities," to use a term coined by Beryl Langer, a Canadian-trained sociologist now at the University of Melbourne, Australia. Instead of "generic" toys, dollified building blocks, she says, "toys have been incorporated into fashion dolls" that prenames specific brands, their characters and

accessories. As a result, your child has to have Bratzies! Lego or pregnant Midge this year—another Lego or fashion doll won't do, just as adults "might have a wardrobe full of clothes but have nothing to wear," she adds. "A child might have a toy box full of toys, but nothing worth playing with—nothing that can be taken to school without feeling embarrassed." What's more, the accompanying catalogues showcasing a never-ending array of add-ons make the toy itself seem somehow incomplete. They may be lots of fun and even educational, says Langer, but "there's always something you don't have and it doesn't matter how much you've got, you can always get more." She worries that the constant cycle of desire and boredom, along with heavy-handed marketing, teaches kids "from a very young age that things you want have to be had now, and that however deeply attached to certain toys you might be for a period of time, they'll go out of style." It sends a message, she adds, that life and happiness are about consuming.

Langer points to the broader societal implications of overflowing toy boxes as well. Not only is the toy industry "one of the worst" offenders of environmental labour practices (the Hong Kong Christian Industrial Commission's 2001 report singles out Hasbro, Disney, McDonald's and Mattel), but as says, and accessories from year past end up in the trash, they also pose an environmental threat.

The concept of the "commodity" is to some extent a reality in the Langer

<b>FLAWA</b>	The hipster dolls are into fast cars, fast deportees, fast and cool. <b>\$19.99</b>
<b>PREGNANT</b>	<b>MIDGE</b> (she's homegrown accessory; a nowhere-hacked-into-the-family) <b>\$29.99</b>



goshen household. While Nicole's older cousins introduced her to Barbies, now it's TV ads, store displays and cross promotional marketing like Barbie's Swan Lake video that cue her into trends. "She wants all the stuff, now," says Melissa. And while mom holds fast, telling her daughter to wait for a "special occasion," Nicole already owns some 30 dolls. But her two-year-old sister, Leighton, is more oblivious to materialism. She doesn't care—many accessories. She carries her dolls, wraps them up in a blanket, and deposits them in a crib or toddler clothes, says Melissa, are optional. But that's a state of innocence that parents—and doll workers—know won't last forever.

Concerns about fashion dolls—coupled with the fact that very young girls are playing with them (Clare and Nicole both start at age three at least)—has provoked a bit of a backlash.

Calgary's Hengen says her feminist principles have remained since she became a parent, in part because she sees how

Clare uses the accessories to "have adventures." Still, she introduced a couple of Get Real Girls into her daughter's collection. The Get Real line was developed by Julie Chavez, a former Mattel employee who left the company after realizing her more true-to-life design wasn't going to see the light of day there. The reasonably figured and sensibly dressed dolls do things like play soccer and dream of becoming a scientist.

That same commitment to realism, along with a desire to Canadianize playtime, led Kathryn Gallagher Morton to create the high-end (\$439.99) Maplelea Girls. Modelled on one real Canadian girl, and fashioned by a Canadian artist, the first four variations, introduced in October, hail from towns and cities across the country. They're sold with a journal that not only reflects upon the dolls' "lives," but leaves space for their owner to do the same. Gallagher Morton, president of Atonica Initiatives, hopes her dolls—unlike fashion dolls that, she believes, make growing up seem more glamorous than being young—help kids realize that "their lives are important, and worthy of a story too." Of course, kids will always make their own stories, and with any prop that's available, be it a stick, a toilet paper roll or a third-hand Barbie. But that's not a message doll manufacturers and marketers necessarily want parents to hear.



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Amid the mean, too-lean and make-you-scream items, some stellar gift options

## Dear Santa Claus,

For just beyond the holiday letter I sent last year, in which you taught me to kindly snub the Rapunzel, Faerie, Chicken Dance Elmo and those peace-on-earth-be-damned Zoids toys Spinosaurus, Wer-Shark and Zuber Fing. Now, the festive season is upon us again, and again, Santa, you've done me wrong. Elmo is back with an especially grating version of the hokey-pokey. Taddeo has been surgically enhanced into a winged Odysseus from Swan Lake (he doesn't dance, but his wings light up and flap). Spinosaurus, Wer-Shark and Zuber Fing have once more taken up horfy positions in the Middle East...oops, I mean Toyland.

As you'll have gauged, I won't be springing a ribbon around those abysmal grottoes under any Christmas tree. I am betting, though, that this bird-brained Barbie and Elmo the abominable will be among the hottest toys this season. Happily, there are other options. While browsing store shelves, I've spotted a number of toys and games that offer fun of substance. Here are ten to consider grandkids as to stamp on delight. These no-kidz won't get bored with after a few days. So, thanks for that, and happy holidays to you, the Mrs. and the elves. A present.

**SURPRISE CIRCUS** Chicos, 3 to 4, \$29.99. Simple, colorful and fun, the four wagons with pop-up circus performers can be stacked or made into a train.



### VIKINGS

Playmobil, 4 and up, \$19.99 for longboat and crew, \$29.99 for sea serpent and one Viking.

The longboat rolls and floats, the figures and sea serpent are rich and colorful, and the imagination-stimulating component is huge. There are many smaller packages like a two-horse cart and three Vikings. And you can swap out the longboat with a separate underwater motor.



### K'NEX VIKING ROLLERS

K'NEX, 3 to 7, \$31.99.

**K'NEX MUSICAL FERRIS WHEEL**

K'NEX, 8 and up, \$34.99.

This brightly colored construction system comes in many vehicles and levels of difficulty. The new K'NEX Rollers, which comes in a nifty red case, includes 71 pieces and allows kids to build a wacky analysis of machine and scientific laws. The motorized ferris wheel, which stands a mere 12 inches tall, can also be adapted into two other unique roles, features sound and an abundance of magic.

**B'STYLIN' BUTTON DESIGNER** Boardz, 8 and up, \$24.99.  
**LEGO CURVITZ** Scops, 5 and up, \$16.99  
**ELDO CREATION SYSTEM** Model, 5 and up, \$16.99 to \$19.99.

The popularity of building kits and other activity gifts for girls has grown both to a enviable, the robotics/cool kit trend at young females. Some girls will build stuff with various unison systems, and they'll love doing so. The make-pretty ethos does capture a lot of them early on. With B'style, girls can make their own buttons using a variety of preordained designs. Models are big's system for decorating frames, jewelers, hair clips, pillows, etc. And Eldo is both a construction toy and a way to make jewelry and other items.



### GROWING GARDEN

Glubb Creativity for Kids, 7 and up, \$25.

Children may not

"get" the clever

task-like graphics

on the box, but they'll

love this lush, wacky

update on the Chia Pet, in which real

grain grows out of a

"goal"

the chia seeds

and disappears itself.

### MATCHBOX MADNA WHEELS FIRE STOMPER

Matchbox, 2 and up, \$14.99.

There's a whole line of compelling metal toys in the Matchbox line, and this one—with magnets connecting the various components—can be transformed into six different vehicles. It includes a 10-in ladder and a movable light bar with real lights and sounds.

### LITTLE TOUCH LEAP PAD LEARNER

\$99.99.

### LEAPSTART LEARNING TABLE

LeapPad, 6 months and up, \$69.99

### PRETEACH & LEARN SHOPPING CART

LeapPad, 2 and up, \$79.99.

Longtime

the successful manufacturer

of interactive, educational toys,

expanded its line with three

new products. The

Leap Touch LeapPad teaches

some basic skills by going with

baby's natural "go to my hands" in

existing images. A variation on an established

toy, the learning table is activated by lights and

music. LeapPad's shopping cart, meanwhile, lets

two-times small kids learn of pushing carts and

shoppers, and their sponge-like ability to absorb

information about colors, numbers and food.



### PLAZMARCAR

PlazmaCar, 3 and up, \$49.99.

Can it?

the

incredible

car

no

pedals

or

batteries

but

a

motor

that

uses

your

body

as

fuel

?

It

can

!



### MY FIRST

#### CHEMISTRY KIT

Ballistic Explorer,

4 and up, \$25-\$29.

This lab kit comes

from a company that

exists to innovative

ways to teach kids

science. Its new Spa Science, for example,

teaches chemistry

principles through

spa treatments.



# MODERN-DAY PICKPOCKETS

They stole my credit card number and brought back bitter memories

WHEN I WAS 14 years old, one evening at the mall I spotted a Ralph Lauren woolen baseball-style jacket. The fabric was rich and textured—a midnight-black body with fire-engine red accents and a tiny polo logo to match. When my mom finished helping me into the coat she stood back and gazed ear to ear. She loved it too. “La la,” she declared in Hindi—let’s get it. In a flash, the jacket was off my back and on the counter. The price was more than \$200 and I knew we were overextending ourselves. But I think my mom recognized first to an unknown Sri Indian kid in the failing high school in one of

Ramona’s most proper and indomitable white suburbs, the jacket was taken to cost.

I lit a foot locker as I walked to my locker the next morning. I slipped the jacket over a mess book and headed to class. When I returned to lunchtime, my heart sank as I discovered my confirmation book in four mangy pieces on the floor.

The jacket was gone.

Anger. Name dashed! The kind of irritation sadness you can’t shake off feelings. My dad helped me file a police report but they never did catch the bad guys.

Fast forward 14 years and I’m still a good capitalist grown Andi now, I have credit. Like most Canadians, I’m engaged in a love affair with my plastic. According to a recent report released by the Canadian Bankers Association, there are more than 49.4 million credit cards in circulation in the country. That’s a staggering increase from the 25 million in circulation 10 years ago. These numbers aren’t surprising when you consider some of the horrors that financial institutions dangle in front of us: loyalty rewards including travel, interest-free balances and retail discounts. Not to mention an army of over 600,000 Canadian retailers who couldn’t care less how we pay.

I recently received a margin call from my credit card company. “Mr Khanna, I was wondering if you could verify some information for us,” said the entirely pleasant gentleman on the other end of the line. “Have you been spending a lot of money recently?” No. “Made a couple of big purchases re-



and make repeated visits to bank machines I signed and remained every ‘statement of fraudulence’ says the bank arm. But unlike when the violation hit me like a ton of bricks as I opened my beat-up locker 14 years ago, this time it took a while for the anger to reappear. And truth be told, I was impressed that my bank figured out some thing weird was going on.

I got in touch with Phil Macne, president of MasterCard Canada, to get some insight into how financial institutions are dealing the new breed of bad guys. In the 1990s, increased losses due to fraudulent activity

forced credit card companies and banks to take various steps in dealing with these organized criminals. The issuers have the tech savvy to capture the information on the magnetic strip of a credit card when it is swiped at a gas station or a restaurant, or wherever else a cardholder consumer’s view. The info can then be sent anywhere in the world with the click of a mouse. A fake card is manufactured in Tony Soprano’s basement and he either sells it to other thugs or buys his wife some Cartier.

The banks’ most powerful weapon to battle these guys are “internal networks,” says Macne. That’s fancy talk for a collection of hardware and software that monitors individual consumers’ spending patterns. The system lets me know if I spend, where I spend, and how much I spend. If, for example, my account suddenly withdraws transactions

In Hong Kong, the system will flag that unusual activity. And I get a call. In my case, the card was being used simultaneously in north and west Toronto.

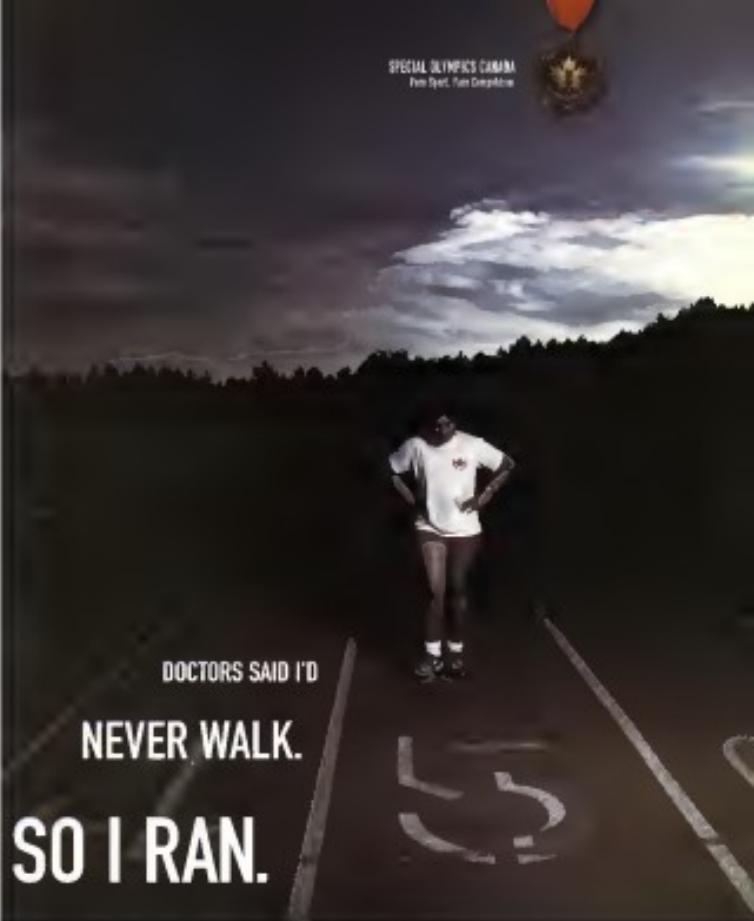
Law enforcement has also stepped down. “We’ve seen a number of arrests and returns Canada-wide at a high level in the crime rate,” says Gord Jamie son, director, risk and security, VISA Canada. He’s a former RCMP officer who worked in payment card related crimes. In Jamie son’s experience, the bank paternalism amounts used as seed money for other criminal behaviour.

All these measures have reduced the sort of fraud, but it still occurs plenty often. So check your statements carefully every month in case the sound networks let you down. “Treat your card like a passport,” says Macne. And remember: “They’re not hitting you over the head and taking your credit card—be a smart thief.” ■

Sumit Khanna of Toronto has not yet witnessed his new credit card number.

To comment, visit [www.macleans.ca](http://www.macleans.ca).

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## CLOSING NOTES



### People | Swapping his light sabre for a pen and paper

When the world first took notice of Hayden Christensen, George Lucas's pick for young Darth Vader, the Thornhill, Ont., actor was prone to giving snarky, biting interviews. Now that he has a few more movies, and good reviews, under his Jedi belt, he is more easy-going and fast to talk to. And since playing Stephen Glass—a young New Republik journalist who fabricates elements of more than 27 articles—in the new movie *Shattered Glass*, Christensen, 22, has found a common interest with those who write about him:

"While Christensen was researching the role, he visited the Montreal Gazette. 'I wanted to get a feel for the house,'" he says. "Also I wanted an idea of the sense of am-

biton. It's more prominent than I expected." In the movie, Glass is also eager to gab about, but he does so by baiting his co-star and being a helpful and likable guy around the office. "He was a unique can can," says Christensen. "He was a bit of an answer and had a hyper apologetic attitude."

If being personable was part of Glass's act, it comes naturally to Christensen—so much so that in the past he tried to suppress that aspect of his character. "When I first started going on auditions," he says, "I was harder to be really nice. I wanted to find that I earned the role by doing the best work—I never wanted it because they liked me." But they do.

SANDRA DEDER



MICHAELA MCKEE/MINTY PHOTOGRAPHY

## LISTINGS

DARIA, A CHRONICLE  
BY: DAVID LINDNER  
PRICE: \$19.95  
ONLY hours after Diana, Princess of Wales, died in 1997 following a car crash in Paris, flowers and heartfelt messages from people all over the world began to pour in to Kensington Palace. In all, more than 25,000 letters and cards were received at the royal residence while more than 260,000 notes and other tokens of grief for the "people's princess" were reflected at St. James's Palace.

Now, some of those touching tributes, along with other artifacts—memorabilia, will be on display at the Design Exchange in Toronto, as part of a celebration marking its North American premiere. The exhibit consists of more than 150 pieces, including home movies from Diana's childhood. Also featured is her wedding gown and some 20 dresses she wore at public engagements.

The material, which has been on view every summer in England for the past six years, is expected to draw about 200,000 visitors while it's in Canada.

[www.dia.org](http://www.dia.org)

CELESTE STONE

PHOTOGRAPH BY JEFFREY M. COOPER



83



**John Intini starts a sentence ...  
Diana Gabaldon finishes it**

It's nearly impossible to get a word in edgewise with Diana Gabaldon. The best-selling Scottsdale, Ariz., author speaks and—unless she's writing her 800-page tomes—wants to make a mania. She has a long-winded habit of trying alternative-farm fiction; her recently released *Last Leaf and the Privet Master* is a 300-page short story. Gabaldon, 51, recently finished *Macmillan Research Reporter* John Intini's sentences.

Intini by having sex in the corner. VOWCES IN MY HEAD ... have always been there. I call it the other side. Writing is like walking beside a big field with a lot of excreting people doing fascinating things. Just between me and them is a plastic sheet. In some places it's clear, while in others it's like a garbage bag is in the way and I have to feel with my hands to get their messages.

**SALES OF WRITING**  
... don't exist.  
**WINTER'S BLOCK**...  
has happened to me since my life began. It was when I was writing my Ph.D. dissertation. I got out of it by writing a journal—just a record of my day. Every winter has cold days. The only way out is to write.

**SELLING MY BOOKS IN THE ROMANCE SECTION** ... informs me I don't have a problem with good romances. It's just that I don't write women's fiction. Some stores have even put *Last Leaf* in the romance section. It's a historical mystery with a gay protagonist, for goodness' sake. There's no love story and no sexy, my heart says.

**CORNN** ... two lost-crop desert tortoises. When I give them a cricket, they chase it down—by the way, watching a tortoise run is very funny—they eat it and then cele-

#### ESSENTIAL READING

1. **PLAYED THE FRENCH**  
From *The History*  
Artemis University  
entertaining hand.
2. **NO ADOPTION**  
For most adults  
reading foreign  
culture programs.
3. **WRITES A WHILE**  
in their to clean  
a tortoise's tushy shell  
and use as decoration.

#### Books | Now you see it, now you don't

Harry Houdini was a fan of *Houdini's Magic*, starring in Jim Blonsky's, author of *Adding the Pictures* (Houghton Mifflin). Watching the original escape artist at all three try to duplicate the same chicanery expected of a conjurer was "a bit like watching a wonder play the violin," Blonsky, 41, said. Houdini's passion for a trick isn't fully detailed in the small world of professional magicians; before 5,200 people in New York's Hippodrome theater he made a 27-foot-long Indian elephant vanish. It was one of the great moments of magic's Golden Age, which also featured the first recorded pretty girl seen in full act (1919), and the many innovations of Harry Kellar, the model for the original version of Oz. What made for all the sensationalist stories were advances in optics and psychology achieved by 19th-century illusionists.

Through means ranging from *soybean* (study by soybean) one another, Blonsky's captivating cultural history, complete with diagrams, shows how they did it all.



#### BestSellers

##### Fiction

PUBLISHED THIS WEEK	
1. <b>THE MAN BETWEEN</b> (W.H. SMITH)	4
2. <b>THE WOLF</b> (HARPER)	1
3. <b>WHITE CAFE</b> (QUARTET)	1
4. <b>WHITE CHOCOLATE</b> (QUARTET)	1
5. <b>WHITE HORSE</b> (CHARLES)	1
6. <b>THE DA VINCI CODE</b> (LITTLE, BROWN)	1
7. <b>THE HOLLOW BRIDGES</b> (JULIA SPENCER-FLEMING)	1
8. <b>DEATHBED</b> (TRACI BICKEL)	1
9. <b>DISRESPECT</b> (MIRI STRICKLAND)	1
10. <b>POISON</b> (KATHLEEN MORRISON)	1
11. <b>THE INVISIBLE</b> (ROB GOURLEY)	1

##### Non-fiction

1. <b>SMART HOME WITH EASY HEAT</b> (HOME DEPOT)	1
2. <b>RESCUE! 64 SURVIVAL</b> (JAMES CLARKSON)	1
3. <b>PAUL'S WORKS OF ART</b> (QUADRANT)	1
4. <b>MILITARY MEDALS</b> (QUADRANT)	1
5. <b>WHAT'S NEW, BABY?</b> (ANNIE MCINTOSH)	1
6. <b>PRIMROSE LEADERSHIP</b> (KAREN KLEIN)	1
7. <b>A WOMAN'S DUTY</b> (MICHAELE COOPER)	1
8. <b>INDEPENDENT</b> (JONATHAN DRAPER)	1
9. <b>GOALS</b> (JULIA DRAPER)	1
10. <b>INFLUENCE</b> (MARK HALLINGER)	1
11. <b>THE PAPER</b> (MICHAEL DUNN)	1

1 week old  
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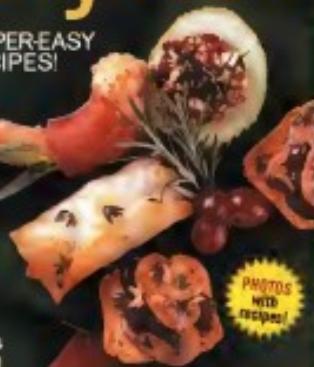
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## TV | Don't hate us because we're beautiful

Concerning the markers on lifestyles of the incredibly rich and fabulously sheltered, CTV sits back to back starring Dec. 2. The public pitched-hurrah double-billed blend begins with *Newlyweds*: Nick and Jessica, which documents marriage from the perspective of pop stars Nick Lachey (formerly of NSYNC) and Jessica Simpson (the poor woman's Britney Spears) live in a 6,400-sq-ft home near Los Angeles. Nick is an empathetic spouse, understandably exasperated by his clay-ville. Her blundering defiance under Buffalo wings because she doesn't care buffalo are more hurtful than embarrassing.

By contrast, *The Simple Life* is brutally cynical. Infamous socialite on the party circuit, Paris Hilton (the public has known whose homemade sex tape recently set the entire Internet alight) and Nicole Richie (daughter of Lionel, Mt. All Night Long) leave Los Angeles to live with the farming

Nicole and Hilton are down on the farm

poor in Arkansas. The girls try to be good but are unsuccessful by the end of the first episode. Nicole has already poked about involving their host family's son in a threesome. Gooey. Clumsy from upstaging herself—like girls serving burgers, doing first chores, Nicole with her arm stuck up one's butt—she's entertaining, but audience sympathies will lie with the family. They look like they've been visited by a plague. In truth, they have.

JONATHAN RICHARDSON

## TV | A wondrous talent? Close, but no guitar.

air date: Nov. 21, 2004, 8:30 p.m.

Those who can do, those who can't, play no guitar, and those who perfected the art of picking an invisible banjo for the world championships in Dale, Alberta. This documentary follows a Canadian contractor, the much-reduced Andrew Buckley (right), who could teach even the most nervous music students three blues about the joys of instruments rock.



## Books | Out of Africa

**Christopher DeStefano** – multi-millionaire financier and philanthropist, Olympic athlete and knight—is the first to say he's "not the writer" (his younger brother Michaelis, the father of two now-cast critics who might say after him, "he's certainly a different writer than Michaelis"), the award-winning author of *The Angel Patient* and *Aud's Thrust* that the Christopher's non-fiction books are remarkable works of their kind, subtly interweaving travel, history and biography. Michaelis's review:

Hemingway in Africa [Christopher DeStefano], is perhaps his finest, combining literature scholarship on one of the seminal novels of the 20th century with intriguing glimpses into DeStefano's life.

DeStefano, 75, is a son of Ernest Hemingway the man ("I detest my biography")—but nonetheless the author is another mother, "The Snows of Kilimanjaro" has always been for me the greatest piece of literature I've ever read." He says DeStefano's "uncharitable" 2001 study about a dykes writer who totally respects writing, DeSantos, "is every thing I have written but that story has become reality." By following in Hemingway's footsteps over the course of the novelist's last sixteen years, DeStefano hoped to find out why about, spoiled Hemingway's "most penetrating look at a writer's failure." And he does just that, by mapping Hemingway's response to the constant through the prism of his love. The results what DeStefano calls "A love letter to Africa," a portrait that shows how much the continent has changed—at reality and at Hemingway's perspective—since Hemingway's first visit.

ERIN HETHCOCK

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# STUFF'S ABOUT TO HAPPEN

Everyone in Ottawa is awaiting change. No one knows what it will bring.

"IT'S A STRANGE TIME," an Ontario Liberal MP said. "People kind of feel, 'What's all this stuff's gonna happen?' right? But they don't know what's gonna happen."

Precisely. A new prime minister is about to take office. He will face a new, energized Conservative opposition. A strong new New Democrat leader is already campaigning for what everybody in Ottawa expects will be a spring election.

Everybody except me. Just in case I'm wrong, I called a few dozen MPs from every party and asked what the mood is. The answer is that everybody expects more stuff to happen.

They just aren't sure what.

While they wait to find out, many continue to do their jobs. Paul Martin is living as good as his word when it comes to letting MPs draw up their decisions before he makes them. The Liberal caucus plans to hold a two-day retreat on Dec. 3 and 4, then an other brief meeting for Dec. 10, and a final session on Jan. 8 to lay groundwork for a new Throne Speech. Mark Layton plans to use the meetings to give the book an earful.

Layton is the MP for Sydney-Victoria in Nova Scotia. A veggie-cable-freeze byword, he has nothing to do but sit back and let his chairman of the Commons committee, as he has a bunch of big ones, be worn right down. He lined them up: environmental hot spots, especially his neighbourhood—Layton By Ponds And to Africa. Relations with Muslim countries. Improving relations with the Americans. "I had Paul Cellucci [the U.S. ambassador] up to Cape Breton over this summer. There were big conflicts. You know what a conflict is, don't you? [No, it's a big party.] Played some golf."

A lot of Liberals are passing grooves into the floorboards, waiting to see whether they get use. Martin's cabinet: "There's a kind of silly jockeying going on," Layton says. Like every Liberal MP these days, he isn't much preoccupied with a cabinet job. Unlike some, he sounded credible.

The world's most worn-out sweeping change. New faces. Lots of phantom fits for incumbents, then. One Ontario Grit is sleep-

there, "a frustrated Prime Nov Democrat said. Printing the worst of the Chrétien years column is proving oddly eventful and educational for the best of the Chrétien years.

That MP might rage given salage from the plights of Dennis Mills, the Liberal in Toronto-Dufferin. "I'm facing an uphill battle against the leader of the NDP [Jack Layton] and the Toronto Star, which is supporting the NDP," Mills said. "So I'm in tough." The Star's support of Layton's NDP is no more than a rumour, but it has Ontario urban Liberals spooked.

Oddly enough, like a Star-NDP alliance will play a big part in the coming campaign. In Saskatchewan and Manitoba, New Democrats are worried that the new grand chief of the Assembly of First Nations, Phil Fontaine, is putting the invisible Aboriginal vote behind the Greens.

And a surprising number of Conservatives are kind of sweet on Layton. "Jack Layton is the best NDP leader for us," an Alberta Alliance MP said. "The worst leader for us would have been Bill Blaikie." Why? On the Prairies, a surprising amount of Reform/Alliance support comes from working-class Prairie voters who once supported Terry Douglas's NDP. Layton can't make those wonks back, or so the betting goes. In urban Ontario, meanwhile, higher support for Layton's NDP will come at the expense of the Liberals—allowing Conservatives to pick off some seats.

Looks like the Conservatives will need the help. You would be surprised at how little fear the new Conservative party strikes in the hearts of its opponents outside Alberta. Everyone assumes Stephen Harper will win the leadership. Everybody respects his intelligence. Most expect lots of Tories to defect and vote Liberal.

It's change, even the right message for Martin? This MP isn't sure. "You gotta be careful with that," says Campbell said. "and she was no Molotov and people said, 'You're right.' John Turner said he was no Trudeau and people said, 'You're right.'

Which brings us to the election. Few in any party expect Martin to crater. Many may ring against him, hope only to contain the damage he might inflict at the ballot box. "Somehow he's been able to play the great recovery card of being able to say, 'I wasn't'



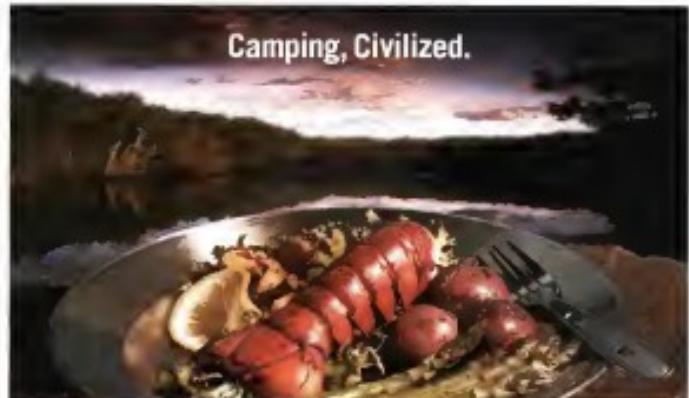
real. 'If I'm looking for new faces, why would he look at us?' Most of us have been there for more than a decade. Not long to look outside."

An MP who has seen John Chretien's election wonders what it'll be like now, maybe as 30 minutes' demolition: "We lead until the election, you'll have 30 people in the backbench who know the file better than the one-time ministers. That's interesting."

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